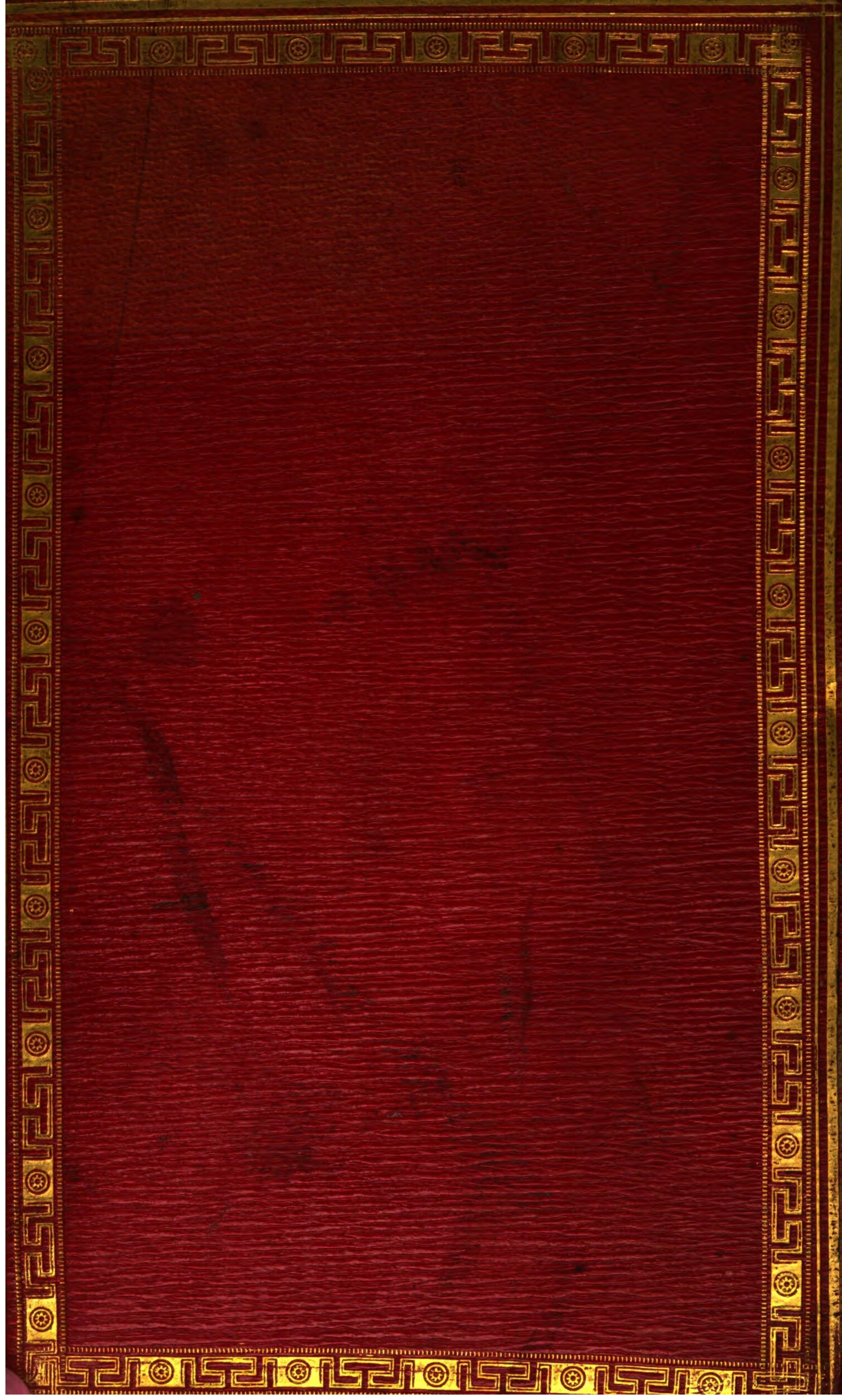






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# LECTURES

## SCRIPTURE PROPHECY

BY

WILLIAM BINGO CHILYER, D.D.



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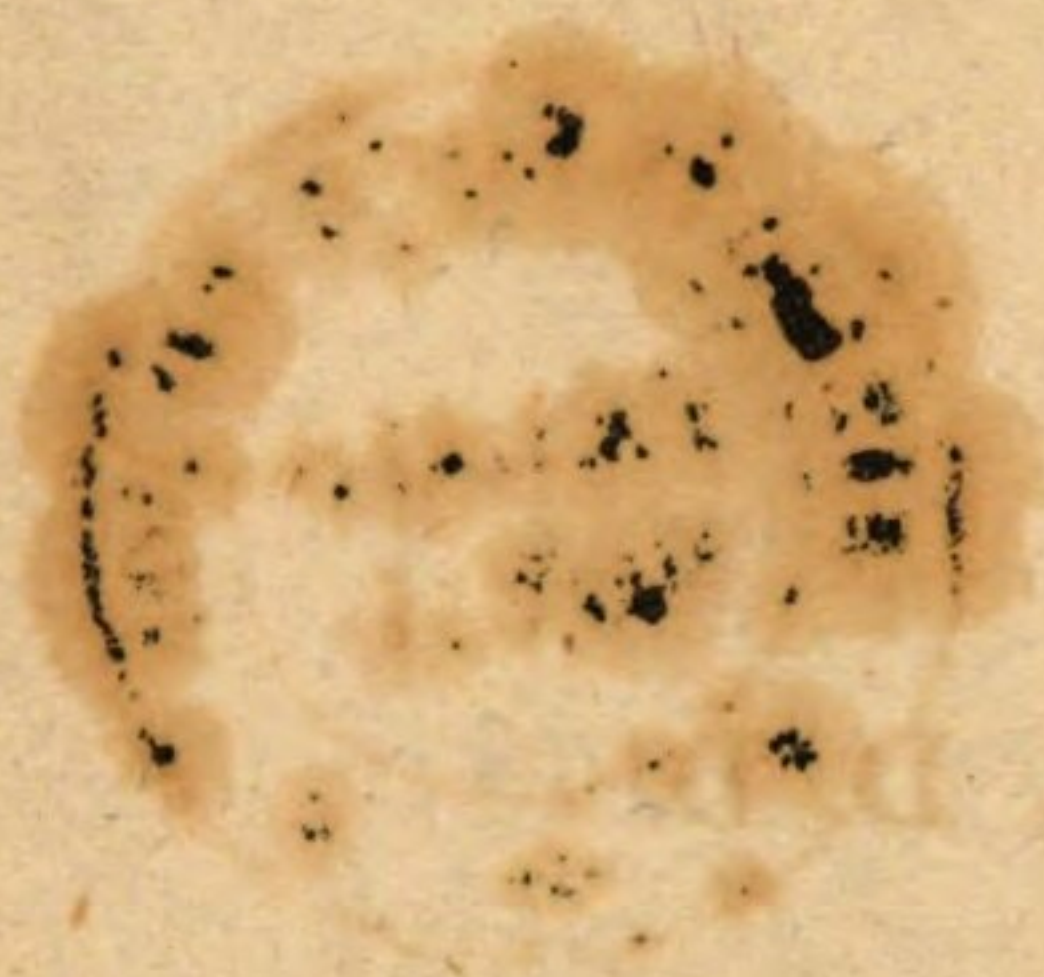
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SCRIPTURE PROPHECY



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ON

## SCRIPTURE PROPHECY.

BY

WILLIAM BENGOLLYER, D.D.



— Μέγα δεῖ τὸ θεῖον ἡγεῖσθαι, καὶ τιμᾶν αὐτὸ πανταχῶς καὶ σέβειν, καὶ τῆς ἀληθείας μὴ τὰ πρὸς ἡδονὴν καὶ βέλῃσιν πιθανώτερα δοκεῖν· ὑπολαμβάνειν δ' ὅτι προφητείας καὶ τῆς διὰ τῶν τοιούτων προγνώσεως ἔδεν ἐστὶ συμφωρότερον, παρέχοντος ἔτι τὴ θεῶν τί δεῖ φυλάσσασθαι.

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SCRIPTURE PROPHECY.



BY

WILLIAM BENGO COLLYER, D.D.

THE world will justly think, that  
I am going myself, to the  
scriptures, to see what they say  
of me.

ships; but I can say with truth, that

respect, and not ambition, is my mo-

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ive; and that I feel myself paying a

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1800



TO THE  
RIGHT HONOURABLE  
ISABELLA,  
COUNTESS DOWAGER OF GLENCAIRN.

---

MADAM,

THE world will justly think, that I am doing myself honour, by inscribing these Lectures to your Ladyship; but I can say with truth, that respect, and not ambition, is my motive; and that I feel myself paying a tribute less to rank than to friendship. If an uninterrupted succession of long and kind attentions deserves to be



recorded on the memory and on the heart ; if gratitude may be allowed a place in literary productions (a place too frequently occupied by adulation,) I may, without censure, indulge my feelings, in prefixing your name to a work, which has been encouraged by your approbation, and in part executed under your own roof. You would not accept homage paid merely to your elevated station; and you are sensible of the instability of human distinctions, while you stand the last representative of an ancient and illustrious House, and are about to resign the noble and venerable title of GLENCAIRN, to the desolations of time, and the silence of the grave. I might tarnish the lustre of your coronet with



a tear of regret, if I could not look beyond this close of human greatness: but, I hope and believe that you are anticipating distinctions of a superior order; and, who can deplore the resignation of a diadem which fades hourly, for that crown which the Righteous Judge will bestow upon his people, in the day of his coming? —not a star of which can be extinguished by adversity, nor can the force of time, or of death, dislodge it from the head of its wearer!

The VOLUME upon which this work is founded, is dear to you as well as to me; there is, therefore, on every consideration, both personal and religious, a manifest propriety, in dedicating the result of my labours to



your Ladyship ; while I am gratify-  
 ing the sincere and unaffected feel-  
 ings of my heart, in thus publicly  
 subscribing myself,

MADAM,  
 Your Ladyship's

faithful and obliged

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## PREFACE.

**T**HE circumstances of the times, so eventful in themselves, so important in their consequences, and so uncertain, when judged only by their present aspect, as it regards their issue, have not merely roused the attention of mankind, but excited the most painful degree of apprehension. While politicians have been confounded in their arrangements, and disappointed in their speculations; while the most extraordinary direction has been given to human affairs; and empires, whose bases appeared laid almost with the foundations of the earth, and promised to be coeval with time, have been shaken and overturned; the inquiries of mankind have been directed in search of a cause commensurate with effects so pro-



digious; and while they have confined their attention to the projects of ambition, and have separated present events, from the grand scale of providence, as it has been exhibited in all successive ages, from the beginning of all things, their investigation has failed of it's object, and their labours have reaped disappointment. The friends of Revelation have contemplated the progress, and the present posture, of public affairs, with no less anxiety than others; but they have regarded them through a different medium: they have considered the present eventful period as only a link in the infinite chain of eternal providence; and as preparatory to the completion of those purposes of God, which are obscurely intimated in prophecies unfulfilled, and which shall consummate the sublime scheme of human redemption. Under this impression, the subject of prophecy has recently excited very considerable interest: and the speculations of the mind have been naturally directed to that branch of it, which appears more immediately to respect the present, and to look forward to the future. After the very favourable re-



ception which the Lectures on Scripture Facts, received from the public, both from the pulpit and the press—I was induced (by considerations similar to those which first roused me to endeavour to engage the attention of young persons especially on the value of Revelation) to consider the argument of prophecy, at this moment so singularly interesting; with a view, hereafter, to extend my plan to other branches of evidence. Leaving the hypotheses which have been advanced, respecting events not seen as yet, to be established or demolished by time and providence, for reasons which I have assigned at large in the Introductory Lecture of this Volume, I aimed at a *selection* of those prophecies which are of the most importance relative to past events, and respecting the accomplishment of which, no reasonable doubt can remain, from the ample and convincing corroborations of subsequent historical testimonies. So far, the plan differs, I believe, from most of my predecessors' treatment of the subject; and the form in which these are discussed, al-



most intirely so. In a comparison of prophecy with facts, which have been unitedly exhibited so often by different writers, nothing absolutely new upon the subject can be expected ; but the manner of elucidation may be original, while the subjects treated are common. I have endeavoured to place this point of Scriptural evidence, in an attractive shape before the young persons of the present age ; and should not these Lectures be deemed to have marked out a plan altogether new, they are surely, in their amplification at least, more than mere compilations. With the same unaffected feelings of diffidence, arising from a consciousness of imperfection in the execution of my plan ; with the same desire to reap advantage from liberal criticism ; with the same earnest wish to render some small assistance to the cause of religion ; and with the same mingled anxiety and hope, with which the Lectures on Scripture Facts were committed to the press ; these discourses on Scripture Prophecy are ushered into the world, and submitted to the tribunal of public opinion.



It is true, that I expect less from our public organs of criticism, than while I was ignorant that criticism had prostituted itself to serve party, and submitted its once-enlightened principles to the regulation of a party-spirit. I owe much to some of our periodical publications, however, on the article of criticism, in reference to the former Lectures; and my obligations shall be expressed in their proper place, when the second edition of Scripture Facts, which is now in the press, shall be published. I have followed the same plan respecting the notes to this work; and have placed at the close of the respective Lectures, any extracts of historical testimony, or any literary quotations, which appeared to throw light upon the subject treated, but which would have interrupted the course of discussion, marked out, and pursued in the Lecture itself. In soliciting anew the attention of the public, I beg to express my sincere and fervent gratitude for its past patronage.

W. B. C.

BLACKHEATH-HILL, KENT,

AUG. 10, 1809.



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LECTURES  
ON  
SCRIPTURE PROPHECY.

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LECTURE I.

INTRODUCTORY—THE NATURE AND KINDS OF  
PROPHECY.

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2 PET. I. 21.

*For the prophecy came not in old time by the will  
of man: but holy men of God spake as they were  
moved by the Holy Ghost.*

IN entering the temple of Revelation, one of the first objects which has attracted the attention of all ages, and which constitutes a grand support, is the pillar of prophecy. Like the celebrated obelisks of Egypt, it is covered with hieroglyphics, which the wisdom of man, and the skill of science, in their combined efforts, attempt in vain to decypher. There is one interpreter whose elucidations never fail to render the inscription intelligible. It



is Time. His hand retraces all the figures before the eyes of succeeding generations ; his interpretation is recorded by the pen of faithful, impartial history : and by comparing the commentary with the original, we are able to comprehend both the one and the other. This pillar is adamant, and resists the impressions of age. It's inscriptions were written by hands which have long since mouldered into dust ; and by persons who did not themselves always understand what they wrote, nor were able to explain the characters which they formed ; but the substance of them was dictated by God himself, and the column is his own workmanship. There have been many fruitless efforts made to shake this monument of infinite wisdom, and to erase these lines of unsearchable knowledge : but the pillar remains unmoved, the lines unimpaired, and the whole uninjured either by malice or by years. The parts of this singular elevation, which stand nearer the roof of the temple, are covered by an impenetrable cloud. The whole pillar was once equally involved ; but Time, who has rolled away the mist from it's base, shall at the destined period unveil the remaining part of it ; and while we shall be able to read the writing, he shall announce, with unerring perspicuity, the interpretation.

To speak without a figure, one of the princi-



pal evidences in support of revelation, is Scripture Prophecy. The larger proportion of these predictions have been elucidated by subsequent transactions; and corresponding events of an indisputable nature, have fixed with infallible certainty their application to the objects foreseen and foretold. They were delivered originally by men who did not always understand the import of their own language; and the very terms in which they are couched must therefore be considered as divinely inspired. Efforts have been made, on the one hand, to diminish the force of these predictions, and to reduce them to mere wishes relative to the future, which might, or might not be fulfilled: on the other, to destroy their evidence, and to invalidate their veracity altogether, by representing them as productions subsequent to the circumstances which they profess to foretel; but these assaults have been as unsuccessful as they are ungenerous; and almighty truth continues to prevail. Many prophecies yet remain to be fulfilled; but till they shall have received their full accomplishment, till Deity shall fill up his own outline, till time shall point out their meaning and determine their objects, they will continue impenetrably obscure, they will defy the researches of the wise and the learned, they will effectually baffle the ingenuity of man, and every comment attempted upon



them, every explanation proposed, can claim to rank no higher than mere, unsupported, uncertain conjecture. But what we “know not now, we shall know hereafter.” To future generations the prophecies which refer to the latter days will be as obvious and perspicuous, as those which relate to past ages are to us, who have received the evidences of history on the very facts which they predicted.

He that opposes Revelation as a whole, ought in justice to it's evidences, to examine all it's several parts, to weigh it's distinct testimonies, and to answer one by one the arguments which are produced in it's favour. Modern scepticism has discovered this to be a perplexing and difficult attempt: it has found it easier to deny it as a whole, without even a candid examination of any one of it's numerous claims. It is easy to dwell on general subjects, till truth is lost in a labyrinth of intricate and unconnected assertions. The champions of infidelity only skirmish; they continually shift their ground: they advance, they retreat, they contend now at a distance, now near at hand, sometimes in the open field, and driven thence, sometimes in ambuscade; while the troops of religion proceed to measure their ground with firm and steady feet; they may be said to be annoyed by such modes of attack, but they have the evidence of time,



that they are not, and that they cannot be, defeated. The adversaries of Revelation are compelled, whenever they can be brought to fair and open reasoning, to yield point after point; and yet, when they have been repeatedly foiled in every attack upon the separate evidences of Christianity, they still advance bold and general objections to the whole. It is also no uncommon thing to find the friends of scepticism forming a system of their own, which they represent as the system of revealed religion; and having refuted their own production, they demand the honour of a triumph over the Bible, which never maintained the principles advanced in it's name, nor acknowledged the theory which is imputed to it by it's opponents. It is easy to dress up Christianity in a garb wrought in the loom of their own imaginations, and to ridicule the colours in which they array it: but let it be seen simply as it is, decorated in it's native beauty, adorned with it's native splendours, wearing it's native majesty, and then decide upon the justice or the invalidity of the title which it advances to divine authority.

It is some time since your attention was called to a consideration of the Facts recorded in the Scriptures, and to those confirmations of them, which time has yet spared in the fragments of remote antiquity, and on the pages of heathen



records. It is now proposed to submit, with humility, to your investigation, some remarks on the truth and accomplishment of Scripture Prophecy. Before I describe the outline of the course which it is my purpose to pursue, something may be said on the undertaking itself. I well know how extremely difficult it is to render Lectures like the present interesting to a public congregation. The Lecturer labours under these peculiar disadvantages: that a proportion of his hearers, not having read upon the subject, are unacquainted with the nature and authority of the evidences which he produces: that others dislike to think so accurately, and to attend so closely as this method of discussion requires: while some are ready to conclude his exertions altogether superfluous. With respect to the two former classes, we shall endeavour to render the subject as accessible as possible to every understanding: and to the last we take the liberty of submitting a few observations on the invalidity of their objections. If indeed the subjects to be treated could be justly ranked among those “ foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law,” which we are commanded to “ avoid, because they are unprofitable and vain,” most gladly would I lay aside a train of pulpit exercises, which while it is more laborious, is perhaps less generally ac-



ceptable than the ordinary mode of teaching. But we are commanded to hold fast “faith and  
 “a good conscience,” to keep “that which is  
 “committed to our trust, avoiding,” and, according to our ability, opposing “profane and  
 “vain babblings, and oppositions of science,  
 “falsely so called, which some professing have  
 “erred concerning the faith”—and to expose  
 “the philosophy and vain deceit,” which exalts  
 itself against the truth and the claims of Revelation.

Those who imagine that these dark and mysterious parts of the Bible should not be brought forward for the purpose of pulpit discussion, will do well to consider how much they would contract our efforts, how completely they would retrench the word of God, and what an argument they would put into the mouth of infidelity. Is a large proportion of a volume professedly inspired, to be deemed by those who admit its authority unimportant or obsolete? If its prophecies be abandoned, it is reduced to one-third of its present bulk: and the larger part of the writings upon which our pulpit exercises are founded is thus rendered useless to the ministers of the sanctuary. We are ready to grant that a very few pages of the scriptures would be sufficient for hearers who imagine that doctrinal subjects alone should be produced, and for



preachers, who dwell continually upon some favourite point or precept. But we have not “so learned Christ,” as to regard any part of Revelation unprofitable or vain: we are commanded, on our peril, to place before you in its order, “the *whole* counsel of God.”

Should any be inclined to ask, what such discussions have to do with “preaching Jesus Christ and him crucified?”—we answer, “much every way.” For we derive all our knowledge of him as the Messiah, all the evidences of his mission, all our acquaintance with his character and offices, all our faith in him as the appointed Saviour, from Scripture Prophecy. Jesus himself appeals to this authority; “Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.” It ought to be recollected, that the Scriptures of that time were the Pentateuch, or five books of Moses: the historical records of the country; but principally the prophecies. Is our duty or interest less, on this point, than the duty and interest of those to whom these words were addressed? And if we deem it right to consider the prophecies relating to the Saviour, we must not separate them from their connection with others that have a different aspect.

It may be justly said, that prophecy has employed the most learned and able pens: and that



the treatises on it are innumerable. But the subject is not yet exhausted. Every man has also his immediate connections in which his individual exertions are received with partiality, and his productions read with attention. This may excuse me for entering upon a subject which has been so often and so successfully handled. Nor shall I follow implicitly the track of any of my predecessors. It is my intention to select a *few prominent prophecies*, as a specimen of the whole; and as an illustration of that branch of scriptural evidence which depends upon prediction. If I can decidedly prove to you, that in a few *well established* instances futurity *has* been read, and future events clearly *foretold*, the evidence is as satisfactory as upon any number of instances however extended: since mere human sagacity could not predict one event any more than it can predict ten thousand: and by selecting, and fixing your attention upon a few objects, your apprehension of the subject will be rendered more easy, your conceptions more distinct, your investigation less confused, and as it appears to me, the conclusion more irresistible. My design is included in the following arrangement:

1. The nature and kinds of prophecy.
2. Scripture prophecy distinguished from heathen oracles.



3. Prophecy relating to the Arabs.
4. Prophecies of dying Jacob.
5. Character and prophecies of Balaam.
6. Prophecies of Balaam continued and concluded.
7. Prophecy of Moses relating to the former and present state of the Jews.
8. Prophecies relating to Babylon, Tyre, and the present state of Egypt.
9. Prophecies relating to the Messiah.
10. Prophecies relating to the Messiah continued.
11. Prophecies relating to the Messiah continued.
12. Prophecies relating to the Messiah concluded.
13. The prophecy of Jesus Christ relating to the destruction of Jerusalem.
14. On prophecies unfulfilled.

The present and the succeeding Lecture must be considered as introductory. *This*, is designed to explain the nature of Scripture prophecy—the methods employed in conveying it, and to meet some objections opposed to it: *That*, is intended to distinguish between Scripture prophecy and those oracles which bore some resemblance to prophecy, and which infidelity, ready to try every thing that can dis-



parage Revelation, has attempted to place upon an equality with it. We shall endeavour,

I. To explain the nature, and to demonstrate the various descriptions of Scripture Prophecy.

1. By the term PROPHECY we mean *the foretelling of future events*: and this power, if we can prove that it did ever exist, must be communicated immediately from the omniscient God: since man has ever been the pupil of sagacity, and the companion of hope, but was never endowed with prescience as a natural faculty. Definitions cannot be too simple to be intelligible: it is our intention to abide by all the consequences deducible from that which we have given, in the future discussion of this important subject: and we mean by it to distinguish Scripture Prophecy from all the impositions which have been attempted by the designing upon the ignorant, from all the fables of antiquity, and from all the dreams of those, who by the exertion of their own natural powers, have presumptuously endeavoured to plunge into futurity, and to divine, in the darkness of conjecture, what time shall develope. We do not mean to say that there was not a difference in the measure of clearness and obscurity with which different predictions were delivered, according to the importance of the subject, or the



design of the prophecy: but we contend that all these portions of the inspired writings are sufficiently plain to evince, that they were not conjectural effusions invented by the writer, but absolute predictions resulting from the foreknowledge of God.

2. The METHODS adopted by Almighty God, who possesses every avenue to the human heart, were various, and diversified according to his pleasure in his intercourse with the different instruments whom he employed. Sometimes his determinations respecting the future were communicated in *a Dream*. It was thus that God predicted to Abram the captivity and the deliverance of his posterity in Egypt. “ And when  
“ the Sun was going down, a deep sleep fell  
“ upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness  
“ fell upon him. And he said unto Abram,  
“ Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a  
“ stranger in a land that is not their’s, and shall  
“ serve them; and they shall afflict them four  
“ hundred years; and also that nation whom  
“ they shall serve will I judge; and afterwards  
“ shall they come out with great substance.  
“ And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace;  
“ thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But  
“ in the fourth generation they shall come hither  
“ again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is



“not yet full.”\* Dreams were also employed as a vehicle of communion with Deity of another nature beside prophecy: and they became the channel of intercourse between God and good men, when no prophetic spirit rested upon the latter. Some were designed for consolation: such was the dream of Jacob at Bethel in the way to Padan-aram. Some were sent for purposes of admonition: such was the dream of Joseph, the husband of Mary, when he was warned of the designs of Herod against Jesus, and was commanded to “take the young child” and his mother, and to flee into Egypt.” Some were sent as tokens of the divine favour, and as pledges of his friendship, when no danger impended, and no particular interposition was necessary: such was the dream of Solomon, at the commencement of his government, when he was instructed to avail himself of the beneficence of Deity, and when he chose wisdom in preference to wealth and to length of days.

As dreams were the ordinary method of communications from God, while as yet the canon of Scripture was incomplete and inadequate to all the necessities of human nature, prophecy, by way of pre-eminence, was more frequently

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\* Gen. xv. 12—16.



the subject of *Visions*. In the use of this term we mean to convey an idea of impressions superior to those received in dreams: and we will specify the distinction which appears to subsist between these apparently similar vehicles of sacred intercourse. Dreams took place when the man was *asleep*: God whispered, (so to speak) some future event to the mind, which time was to unfold. But a vision surprised the prophet when he was *awake*; and abstracting him from all surrounding objects, impressed upon his imagination other scenes, visionary indeed, but which absorbed all his attention. In the mean time all his senses were exercising their several functions: he spoke—he understood as at other times—only that the designs of God, passing before his imagination, swallowed up all his faculties. For the sake of illustration—Joseph's was a prophetic dream, when he saw the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars, bow down to him: but the future designs of God were only imperfectly conveyed to him, and their express meaning could be ascertained only by the event itself. On the contrary, Ezekiel's was exactly what we mean by a vision, and agrees with the representation which we have given of that mode of communication in all its several parts. “And



“ it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth  
 “ month, in the fifth day of the month, as I  
 “ sat in mine house, and the elders of Judah sat  
 “ before me, that the hand of the Lord God fell  
 “ there upon me. Then I beheld, and lo, a  
 “ likeness as the appearance of fire: from the  
 “ appearance of his loins even downward, fire;  
 “ and from his loins even upward, as the ap-  
 “ pearance of brightness, as the colour of amber.  
 “ And he put forth the form of an hand, and took  
 “ me by a lock of mine head; and the spirit lifted  
 “ me up between the earth and the heaven, and  
 “ brought me in the visions of God to Jerusa-  
 “ lem \*.” It was by this last method that he  
 disclosed futurity, almost uniformly to the latter  
 prophets. And we may also observe here, that  
 it was no uncommon thing for the body to be  
 affected by the impressions of the mind; and the  
 prophet to be wafted, under the influence of the  
 spirit, from place to place by rapid and almost  
 momentary transitions. Thus Obadiah feared  
 to tell Ahab that Elijah had sent him: for he  
 said, “ It shall come to pass, as soon as I am  
 “ gone from thee, that the spirit of the Lord  
 “ shall carry thee whither I know not; and so  
 “ when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot  
 “ find thee, he shall slay me.” Under the same  
 impulse, the same prophet ran before this mo-  
 narch’s chariot to Jezreel. Thus the sons of the

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\* Ezek. viii. 1, &c.



prophets imagined, that at his translation, the spirit of the Lord had “ taken him up, and cast him upon some mountain, or into some valley.” Thus was it also with Philip the Evangelist: “ When they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing: But Philip was found at Azotus.” Our Lord, it is probable, endured the same sort of transportation, when he was “ led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil.”

The method of communication which the Deity adopted in respect of *Moses* differed from all these: and whatever is to be understood by the phrase, that “ God spake to him face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend,” a superior kind of illumination is doubtless intended. It was the highest degree of inspiration. It was not in a dream, or in a vision, that the divine mind was suggested; but towards this illustrious and favoured individual a clearer and more explicit mode of revelation was employed. And this was a privilege peculiarly his own. There were prophets in his days: but none shared with him this pre-eminent honour. When Miriam and Aaron contended for their share of distinction, because God had also spoken to the people by them,



Deity himself thus discriminates between his ordinary communications, and the intercourse which he held with Moses. “Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses\*?” It is probable, that by the “similitude of the Lord,” we are to understand some such visible symbol of the divine presence as the Shechinah, which on occasions of intercourse with Moses the Lord assumed: possibly more splendid and more glorious than the cloud which hovered over the ark. Thus when Moses descended from the Mount, where he received the Law, his face shone so brightly with reflected radiance, that the Israelites could not behold him: and from that time he constantly covered his countenance with a veil. This, however, is immaterial to us at this moment: the passage sufficiently proves, that the intercourse of Moses with Deity was more immediate than that of

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\* Num. xii. 6—8.



any other prophet among his contemporaries or his successors, and that his inspiration was of a higher order.

Sometimes the word of the Lord came to the prophet in an *audible voice*, although perhaps heard only by himself, and expressly told him what he should say. This appears to have been the fact with Samuel, when as yet a child he was employed to denounce the judgments suspended over the head of the corrupted priesthood. He heard himself called by name, and supposed that it was the voice of Eli. The reason assigned for this conjecture on the part of Samuel is, that “he knew not the Lord:” by which I understand that he was ignorant of any such mode of communication on the part of Deity: that an audible voice was not, at that period, the accustomed vehicle of conveying intelligence from God to man. The prophets contemporary with Samuel, were most probably accustomed to visions; he would therefore have been prepared for the ordinary channel of divine intercourse, but was unacquainted with the method adopted in respect to himself. I am the more decidedly of this opinion from the circumstance that Eli himself did not perceive that the Lord had called the child, till the voice had twice addressed itself to him: but had the audible voice been an ordinary method of communication, it is to be



presumed, when he knew that he himself had not called the child, he would have determined at once from whom the voice came. After this, we frequently read, “the word of the Lord “came” to such a prophet, without specifying precisely the method employed: and in these cases perhaps we may in general safely conclude that it was by some such voice.

There remains yet one other mode by which the will of God was ascertained, which we have not named—the enquiry by *Urim and Thummim*. There have been various conjectures respecting this oracle, the mode of consulting it, and the answers given. Without stating these, I shall give you the sentiment which appears to me the most probable. *Urim* is a word signifying *Light*, and *Thummim* implies *Perfection*: terms employed possibly to distinguish at once the clearness and perfection of the answers returned by this oracle, from the darkness and mutilation which characterized those of the heathen world. The *Urim and Thummim* were probably the stones set in the high-priest’s breast-plate, which had engraven upon them the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. It is supposed that the High-priest stood before the ark: that the question of the enquirer was submissively repeated before God (which question usually related to political



matters, and was designed to ascertain the will of God as to any affair, or any enterprize) that the high-priest then looked upon the breast-plate, and according to the lustre from the She-chinah, that was reflected by any of the stones, or that illuminated in an extraordinary degree certain letters engraven on the stones, to distinguish them from the rest, together with, perhaps, some supernatural impulse on his mind, the high-priest shaped his answer. This is the opinion of Josephus, and of the most celebrated Jewish commentators. It appears also from these writers, that none might consult this oracle but the king, or the united congregation\*.

But whatever modes of communication were adopted, the prediction was not affected by the method; and in every instance in which prophecy is concerned, we abide by the simple de-

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\* Consult on this subject the Encyclop. Britan. Art. URIM AND THUMMIM. On the various methods of God's communications to the prophets, the opinions of the Jewish Rabbies, and the commentaries of their most celebrated writers, the literary reader may consult "A Discourse on prophecy, taken from a volume of sermons by John Smith, formerly fellow of Queen's College, Cambridge; published in 1656:" and preserved by Bishop Watson in his Theological Tracts: vol. iv. p. 297—362 throughout. There is so little resemblance between the preceding discussion, and this learned treatise, that I did not think it necessary to refer at all to the work, till I came to the close of my own representation of the subject. See also the Note at the end of this Lecture.



definition of it which we have given—*the foretelling of future events.*

II. Before this part of the subject is dismissed, it may be proper to notice the arguments (if they deserve the name) by which a modern deist has endeavoured to invalidate the evidence of inspiration arising out of prophecy. Had it not been for the former popularity of his incongruous production among the multitude, it would not have demanded notice in any Lectures which could put in the smallest claim upon literary research. I shall be forgiven for omitting to refer to this profane and illiberal effusion of scepticism, which has now, with its writer, passed over to deserved contempt and oblivion. The attack which he makes upon Scripture Prophecy is short, and singularly inconclusive. The following is his language: “All the remaining parts  
“ of the Bible, generally known by the name of  
“ the prophets, are the works of the Jewish  
“ poets and itinerant preachers, who mixed  
“ poetry, anecdote, and devotion, together; and  
“ those works still retain the air and style of  
“ poetry, though in translation.” He passes on to shew, from these assumed principles, that the word “prophesying” simply “meant the  
“ art of making poetry.” If his desultory language be reduced to the shape of arrangement,



his arguments are the following five: The prophets were only poets,

1. Because musical instruments were sometimes employed :

2. Because Saul was in a few instances found in their company :

3. Because Deborah and Barak are called prophets :

4. Because David is included in their number :

5. Because there were “ greater and lesser prophets.”

As these are the only principles on which he attempts to shake the imperishable basis of Scripture Prophecy, we shall answer them separately. The productions which we call prophecies are only poetry.

1. Because “ we read of prophesying with  
“ pipes, tabrets, and horns—of prophesying with  
“ harps, with psalteries, with cymbals, and with  
“ every other instrument of music then in  
“ fashion.”

It is granted that the Hebrew word will signify a *musician*\* as well as a *prophet*†. Neither

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\* A sacred musician, 1 Chron. xxv. 3. Parkhurst's Heb. Lex. and Taylor's Heb. Concordance, upon the word נָבִיא.

† נָבִיא.



is this at all peculiar to the Hebrew language. The Greek word\* which signifies a prophet, is applied in the New Testament also to preachers of the gospel† who did not predict any thing; and in one instance even to a heathen poet‡. In the Latin language, there is a word § common both to a prophet and a poet. But does it follow that because it is applied to the singers and musicians appointed by king David, that it does not apply also to prediction? that because it may signify a singer or a poet, it will not signify a prophet? This reasoning is singular; and in point of fact it is false.

It is further granted that musical instruments were sometimes employed. To this circumstance must be ascribed the objection stated above. But it is not true, that musical instruments were always used, or that they were essential to prophesying. Where the use of musical instruments is mentioned, it is also clearly intimated for what purpose they were employed. When Elisha called for a minstrel||, his mind had been discomposed by the sight of Jehoram, who came to enquire at the hand of the Lord, and who had

\* *προφητης*.

† 1 Cor. xiv. throughout; and 1 Thess. v. 20.

‡ Titus i. 12. See Parkhurst's Heb. Lex. on the word נָבִיא.

§ *Vates*.

|| 2 Kings iii. 15, &c.



forsaken the altar of true religion, for the temple of idols. It is evident, that the intention of the prophet in asking for a minstrel was to quiet the agitation of his mind. This is also the opinion of the Jewish Rabbies\*. But there follows in this very passage a distinct prediction of events, which nothing less than a spirit of prophecy could anticipate. This is a case in point, which turns against opponents their own weapons, and decidedly proves that something more than a poet is intended by the term prophet: and that the use of musical instruments is no evidence against the fact that events were foretold.

2. Because Saul in a few instances was said to prophecy. It is by some supposed that nothing more is intended than that he copied the gestures of the prophets. The word is applied to those who only *pretended* to prophecy† and who imitated the energy of the prophets—“every man that is mad, and maketh himself a prophet.”—It is not absolutely necessary to suppose, that the prophets whom Saul met, were prophets in the full sense of the word; or that he prophesied in the extent of the term. But

\* See Bishop Watson's Theolog. Tracts, Vol. iv. p. 344.

† Jer. xxix 26.



granting this—where is the argument against Scripture Prophecy? Is it objected that none of his predictions are recorded?—It is not therefore certain that none were uttered. Is it objected, that he was not a regular prophet? It was not necessary that he should be so, in order to constitute him an occasional vehicle of the divine will. Some of the later prophets prophesied but once. Is it objected, that he was a wicked man? So also was Balaam: yet we hope to prove *him* a prophet. These might be only a company of men employed in composing hymns, and singing them. They might be prophets also: many a divine hymn was a prediction. In whatever way the fact be interpreted, nothing is proved against the existence of a spirit of prophecy. Another argument produced is,

3. Because Deborah and Barak are called prophets—it is added “not because they predicted  
“any thing, but because they composed a poem  
“or song that bears their name in celebration  
“of an act already done.” The conclusion must be erroneous, for the principles are false.

In the first place, Barak is mentioned but in two different parts of the Scriptures. In the fourth chapter of Judges, he is spoken of, as the son of Abinoam; and in the fifth, he is celebrated as a hero. In the eleventh chapter of the Hebrews he is found on the list of the



worthies; and is enrolled as a great man, and as one who died in the faith. In neither of those places is he once called a prophet. He stands in the same verse with David, and Samuel, and the prophets: but so also do Jephthae, and Sampson, and Gideon; who were never supposed to be either prophets or poets. But if a prophet, in scriptural language, had meant only a poet—he would have been a prophet: for he is associated with Deborah, in the beautiful hymn that succeeded their victory. “Then sang Deborah, and Barak the son of Abinoam, on that day.”

In the next place, it is asserted that Deborah (whom the objector has joined with Barak) “did not predict any thing.” The most effectual answer to this unqualified assertion, is to request you to examine the fourth chapter of Judges, from the sixth verse to the ninth, inclusive. “And she sent and called Barak, the son of Abinoam out of Kedesh-naphtali, and said unto him, Hath not the Lord God of Israel commanded, saying, Go, and draw toward mount Tabor, and take with thee ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali, and of the children of Zebulun? And I will draw unto thee, to the river Kishon, Sisera the captain of Jabin’s army, with his chariots, and his multitudes; and I will deliver him into thine hand. And Barak said unto her, If thou wilt



“ go with me, then I will go: but if thou  
 “ wilt not go with me, then I will not go. And  
 “ she said, I will surely go with thee: notwith-  
 “ standing the journey that thou takest, shall  
 “ not be for thine honour; for the Lord shall  
 “ sell Sisera into the hand of a woman.” Here  
 the issue of a battle is foretold, than which no-  
 thing is more uncertain. And more than this,  
 the very death of Sisera by the hand of a fe-  
 male, the most improbable event imaginable, is  
 predicted. Every thing was exactly fulfilled.  
 That Deborah did not predict any thing is proved  
 to be absolutely untrue. And whether she was  
 called a prophetess, because she wrote an anthem  
 to celebrate this victory, or because she clearly  
 foretold the triumph before the conflict began,  
 we leave to you and to common sense, to deter-  
 mine.

He proceeds to object against the existence  
 of Scripture Prophecy,

4. Because David was ranked among the Pro-  
 phets. “ David is ranked among the prophets,  
 “ for he was a musician; and was also reputed  
 “ to be (though perhaps very erroneously) the  
 “ author of the Psalms.”

It is granted that David was ranked among  
 the prophets; it is denied that it was because he  
 was a musician. You will judge whether or not  
 he predicted future events, when, in the prose-



cution of those Lectures, we shall consider the second, the twenty-second, and a variety of other Psalms ; in which the sufferings, the exaltation, and the reign of the Messiah, were clearly foretold. Surely it was a prophetic eye that foresaw, and a prophetic tongue that predicted, the parting of the Saviour's raiment, the language his persecutors should employ, the cruelties they should practise, the manner of his death by crucifixion, and the very words which he himself would utter as his life departed, many centuries before these events took place. Granting that this is *poetry*, it must be admitted that it is *prophecy* also.

But here is another false assumption, when it is said, that David was "reputed to be the "author of the Psalms." Many are ascribed to him, and doubtless with justice and with truth: but a large proportion of the book of Psalms is assigned to other writers ; and many of them are not distinguished by any name whatever. It is added—"But Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, "are *not* called prophets. It does not appear, "from any accounts we have, that they could "either sing, play music, or make poetry." Now in the twentieth chapter of Genesis, and at the seventh verse, Abraham is expressly called a prophet. Another objection produced against Scripture Prophecy by this writer is,



5. Because “we are told of the greater and the lesser prophets.” He shall himself explain in what respects these terms are inconsistent with the pretensions of prophecy. This is his reason—“They might as well tell us of the greater and lesser God; for there cannot be degrees in prophesying consistently with its modern sense.” Few sentences in the English language, I trust, contain so much absurdity. You have not failed to remark, that an assertion is made, but that it is not attempted to be supported by even the shadow of reasoning; and in a day of enquiry, like the present, we are not to be terrified by bold assertions. Jonah was but once employed in predicting a future event; and Isaiah was occupied in foretelling the designs of God through a considerable number of years. Obadiah delivered but *one* prophecy; and Jeremiah was ordained a prophet from his birth, according to his own language: “Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee; and before thou camest out of the womb, I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations,” Jer. i. 5. And where is the impropriety of calling the one the *greater*, and the other the *lesser* prophet?

He thus proceeds to wind up the whole of these futile objections into a conclusion as injurious, as the principles upon which it is found-



ed are absurd, and false. “ It is altogether unnecessary, after this, to offer any observations upon what those men, stiled prophets, have written. The axe goes at once to the root, by shewing that the original meaning of the word has been mistaken, and consequently all the inferences that have been drawn from those books, the devotional respect that has been paid to them, and the laboured commentaries that have been written upon them, under that mistaken meaning, are not worth disputing about.” It is to be observed, that this conclusion is drawn from those five sources which we have detailed and answered ; and these are deemed, by him, sufficient to destroy the whole body of internal evidence existing in all the prophetic writings. Nay, he declares it unnecessary to consult these ; and denies that they should be heard in their own cause. This is a singular mode of argument. By what means can the nature of these books be ascertained ? and how can it be decided whether they are prophecy, or poetry, or both, or neither, except they are read and examined ? Common reasoners would have consulted a volume which they professed to refute, would have examined a prophecy, before they ventured to assert that it was merely and simply poetry : but the writer in question, has marked for himself a new path. Athirst for



originality, he boasts of having overthrown a volume which he confesses he has not read; and pronounces the whole system of prophecy to be poetry, while he allows that he does not proceed upon the contents of the books themselves, and asserts, with unblushing effrontery, that it is unnecessary to offer any observations upon what the prophets have written.

We admit that the prophets were frequently poets; and that they wrote, for the most part, their prophecies in poetry; and if this objector had understood Hebrew poetry, he would not have abused it in the licentious terms which he has used. But it neither follows from this, that the prophets were only poets; or that poets were generally prophets. Samuel is repeatedly termed a prophet, who has left no vestige of poetry behind him; and Hannah, who composed a most beautiful piece of poetry, is never called a prophetess. He that predicts future events is a prophet, whether he compose in poetry or in prose; and that the prophets *did* predict future events, we pledge ourselves to establish.

Advanced as your time is, I must intrude upon it a little longer, before I leave this pulpit. We have now entered upon a new course of Lectures; and with all the uncertainty connected with human engagements, and with human life, we cannot even conjecture who shall reach the



close of them, or who among us may fall by the way. If Providence should spare my life, I consider myself in the Lectures on Scripture Facts, and in those which I have announced this night on Scripture Prophecy, as only defending the out-works of Christianity, and as sweeping the brink of a large plan, which I should be rash indeed to announce, because some years, at least five, supposing the discussion to be carried on every winter, must of necessity elapse before it's completion. It will be my object to keep each course of Lectures as distinct, and as independent of each other as possible; that if death should arrest my exertions, or the religious public cease to accept my labours, those which shall be finished, may stand unassisted, and be considered as a class of evidence, and a chain of reasoning, complete in itself. Should I ever accomplish the design which I have formed, the internal evidences of the Bible will take their turn in discussion, and the glorious doctrines of the gospel, the great scheme of human redemption, the influence of Christian principles, will be considered. But as you and I hold life upon a tenure which a moment may dissolve, I cannot persuade myself to lose sight intirely of those views which I entertain, under a persuasion of their singular importance and eternal truth, of the source of all success in these and all reli-



gious exertions, at any stage of these discussions. It may be in the power of men, by strong and resistless reasoning to convince the judgment, and to enlighten, in some measure, the understanding. By the exhibition of powerful eloquence, the conscience may be roused, and the passions moved. But nothing less than the operations of an Almighty agent, sanctioning, directing, and applying the means used, can reach the heart, can impress the spirit, can change the will, can influence the life, can save the man. Some may be disposed to deride this sentiment: it is a sentiment which I hold from conviction; and I shall never be afraid either to state or to defend that which I believe to be true. I am persuaded that the energy which kindled the lamp of truth and feeds its perpetual fires; which preserves it from extinction amid floods of sorrow and storms of persecution; which causes it to shed increasing illumination, and fans it daily into brighter radiance—the same energy is necessary to impart and to maintain the flame of devotion, the fire of pure religion upon the altar of the heart. He, who stood upon the brink of night and discord, to call forth light and harmony, and “without whom was not any thing made that was made,” must impart new life to the spirit, or it will remain morally dead in its connection with the



body, and in passing over to another world be plunged into all the horrors of eternal death. While an Apostle declares that all the forces which mere humanity can bring into the field shall be defeated without superior assistance: that “Paul may plant and Apollos water, but “that God must give the increase;” I may well be anxious that a divine blessing should give efficacy and success to labours so far inferior, as those which I now consecrate to God and to you. But if he, who “hath chosen the foolish things of “the world to confound the wise; and the “weak things of the world to confound the “mighty; and base things of the world, and “things which are despised, yea, and things “which are not, to bring to nought things “that are; that no flesh should glory in his “presence;”—if he will condescend to aid my feeble testimony, I shall not despair, nor shall you be disappointed: but what Paul could not do of himself, I shall not fear to accomplish by his Spirit.



## NOTES.

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### NOTES TO THE PRECEDING LECTURE.

“ IT will not be amiss, by a short digression, to shew what this  
“ Urim and Thummim was; and we may take it out of our former  
“ author R. Bechai, who for the substance agrees with the genera-  
“ lity and best of the Jewish writers herein. It was, as he there  
“ tells us, done in this manner. The high priest stood before the  
“ ark, and he that came to enquire of the Urim and Thummim  
“ stood behind him, enquiring with a submissive voice, as if he had  
“ been at his private prayers—‘ Shall I do so, or so?’ Then the  
“ high priest looked upon the letters which were engraven upon the  
“ stones of the breast-plate, and by the concurrence of an enthusi-  
“ astical spirit of divination of his own (I may add thus upon the  
“ former reasons to that which he there speaks,) with some modes  
“ whereby those letters appeared, he shaped out his answer. But  
“ for those that were allowed to enquire at this oracle, they were  
“ none else but either the king or the whole congregation, as we are  
“ told in Massec. Sotah, אין שואלין אלא צבור או מלך. None may  
“ enquire of it, but the congregation of the people, or the king; by  
“ which it seems it was a political oracle.”

*Bp. Watson's Theolog. Tracts, vol. iv. p. 336.*

We have spoken of prophetic dreams and visions with their distinctions from each other, in the preceding Lecture: the following observations, which some of the Rabbies have made respecting the difference between dreams absolutely prophetic and those of an inferior order may not be unacceptable to the reader.

“ These ‘*Somnia vera*’, or *νεθελικα*, ordinarily contained in them  
“ *בשרים בטלים*, something that was *ἀργον*, or ‘void of reality’: as  
“ in that dream of Joseph concerning ‘the sun, the moon, and the  
“ ‘eleven stars bowing down to him’; whereas his mother, which



“ should there have been signified by the moon, was dead and buried  
 “ before, and so incapable of performing that respect to him which  
 “ the other at last did. Upon occasion of which dream the Ge-  
 “ marist. doctors in ‘Berachoth,’ c. 9. have framed this axiom  
 “ שאין אפשר לבר בלא תבן כן אין אפשר לחלום בלא דברים בטלים  
 “ בשם. ‘As there is no corn without straw, so neither is there  
 “ ‘any mere dream without something that is ἀργόν, void of reality,  
 “ ‘and insignificant.’ Accordingly Rab. Albo, in Maam. III. c. 9.  
 “ have framed this distinction between them, אין חלום בלא דברים  
 “ בטלים והנבואה בלה ענין צודק ואמתי. ‘There is no mere dream  
 “ ‘without something in it that is ἀργόν, but prophecy is a thing  
 “ ‘wholly and most exactly true.’”

*Bp. Watson's Theolog. Tracts, vol. iv. p. 307.*

The discussion throughout the whole of this tract tends to establish  
 the outline of the preceding Lecture; but it's mode of argument is  
 so different, and it's composition so dissimilar as the above ex-  
 tracts will shew, that I felt justified in claiming the discussion of the  
 various kinds of prophecy as my own, from the little resemblance be-  
 tween the method of the Lecture, and the learned, laborious re-  
 searches of this essay.

I shall only add a confirmation of the assertion in pages 23 and 24  
 of the preceding Lecture, from this same author. “But it is now time  
 “ to look a little into that place, 2 Kings iii. where, when the Kings  
 “ of Israel, and Judah, and Edom, in their distress for water, upon  
 “ their warlike expedition against the King of Moab, came to Elisha  
 “ to enquire of God by him, the prophet Elisha (v. 14.) seems to  
 “ have been moved with indignation against the King of Israel, and  
 “ so makes a very unwelcome address to him, ‘Surely were it not  
 “ ‘that I regard the presence of Jehosaphat the King of Judah, I  
 “ ‘would not look toward thee, nor see thee;’ and then it follows,  
 “ (v. 15.) ‘But now bring me a minstrel; and it came to pass when  
 “ ‘the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon  
 “ ‘him.’ Which words are thus expounded by R. D. Kimchi, out  
 “ of the Rabbines (with which R. S. Jarchi, and R. L. Ben Gersom  
 “ agree, for the substance of his meaning) אליה ובו אמרו במיום  
 “ שגסתלק ‘our doctors tell us, that from that day wherein his  
 “ ‘master Elijah was took up into heaven, the spirit of prophesy re-  
 “ ‘mained not with him for a certain time; for, for this cause he



“ ‘ was very sorrowful, and the divine spirit doth not reside with  
“ ‘ heaviness.’ Others say, that, by reason of the indignation he  
“ conceived against the King of Israel, he was ‘ disquieted in his  
“ ‘ mind,’ and touching this they say, ‘ That whensoever a prophet  
“ ‘ is disturbed through anger or passion, the Holy Spirit forsakes  
“ ‘ him. From whence learn we this? From the example of Elisha,  
“ ‘ who said, Give me a minstrel.’ Thus we may by this time see  
“ the reason why musical instruments were so frequently used by  
“ the prophets, especially the Hagiographi; which indeed seems to  
“ be nothing else but that their minds might be thereby put into a  
“ more composed, liberal, and chearful temper, and so the better  
“ disposed and fitted for the transportation of the prophetical  
“ spirit.”

*Bp. Watson's Theol. Tracts, vol. iv. p. 344.*



## LECTURE II.

### SCRIPTURE PROPHECY DISTINGUISHED FROM HEATHEN ORACLES.

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2 PET. I. 21.

*For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*

**T**HERE is no truth capable of elucidation more general and complete, than that it is impossible to judge the future with accuracy from the features of the present. Time and mortality destroy human calculations, deride man's boasted prescience, and punish his presumptuous reliance upon futurity.

Sometimes the foundation of a building is laid wide and deep: the materials used are firm and good: the ground is well chosen: the workmen are numerous: the builder is skilful: the plan is correct: the design is magnificent: and yet the topstone is never brought



forth, and the structure is never finished. Death calls the master away to another house: or adversity palsies his arm, dries up his resources, and changes his prospects. That, which was planned for a palace, stands a ruin. The purposed hall of pleasure, becomes the seat of silent desolation. The work which was designed to extort admiration from the eye of envy itself, calls forth a sigh of pity and of regret from the bosom of every passenger. The vision which presented itself to the departed owner of this work, was very unlike this sad picture. Providence refused to fill up the outline which human presumption had drawn; and the event has demonstrated, that he who flattered himself with the completion of his magnificent design, was no prophet.

Sometimes a man sets out upon a journey, with every reasonable prospect of success in his schemes, and of restoration to his family: which expectation hope does not fail to stamp with the currency of certainty. But sickness seizes him by the way; and mortality meets him on his journey. He is hurried to that land, from whose "bourne no traveller returns." He forgot to add, "if God will," at the foot of all his plans, and his family are left to sigh over the neglected warning—"Ye know not what shall be on the morrow."



Sometimes in a family it is predicted that such a boy will be the honour and the stay of his parents' old age. He is diligent, affectionate, and obedient: he has every desirable quality. The calculation is made too soon. Full many a blossom, that expanded it's bosom to the spring, falls from the tree, and leaves no fruit behind it. He is ensnared by temptation. He falls the victim of sin and of misery; and the premature grave that opens to receive him, closes upon the hope, the pride, the happiness of his fond parents, for ever! Again, others are marked as a future curse. Froward, untractable, and insolent, they seem formed only to pierce the bosom that nourished them. But some gentle providence rouses, and the hand of God changes, them. Like the disobedient son in the gospel, they say, "I will not," to the voice of parental solicitation, and in some happier moment repent, and obey the command which they opposed. Human sagacity is frustrated; and human penetration deceived. The first is made last, and the last becomes first.

The little, therefore, that man knows is confined to the present; and that little is slowly acquired. The standard of our powers is not reached at once. The child advances by tardy degrees to the maturity of his judgment; and by the aid of much culture attains at length



the “the fulness of the stature” of his mind. Every day adds some stroke to the painting; widens and swells the original outline; till years give harmony, consistency, and beauty to the whole piece. Our conceptions are always rude at first; and are moulded into shape, or polished into splendour, by the hand of time. We find occasion often to alter our original plan; often to deviate from it; often to abandon the first idea altogether. The most simple device of art required time to bring it to perfection. The rudest hut of our forefathers was not erected in one day; and in that rough outline are to be traced the principles upon which the palace of the monarch, and the temple of religion, were afterwards, by the wonderful progression of human powers towards perpetual improvement, founded. Such is man!—capable of almost boundless advancement, yet in his clearest conceptions and his wisest arrangements, requiring time to touch and to retouch, to alter and to deliberate, to prosecute and to mature his designs.

But God is the same perfectly wise Being from first to last. “His ways are not as our ways, and his thoughts are not as our thoughts;” “his understanding is infinite.” His conceptions and plans are complete from the beginning. Years can add nothing to the stores of his knowledge. The magnitude and extent of his schemes



perplex, distract, and overwhelm us. We are unable to hold the several links of the infinite chain together; and living but an hour we cannot comprehend designs which grasp eternity. The past, the present, and the future, are all before him, are all alike to him. His purpose, his providence, and his work are all united. Thousands of years may intervene between the design and it's accomplishment, but the thread is unbroken. A few month's delay in our plans abates our ardour, and frequently makes us relinquish them altogether. But centuries revolve, and the purpose of Deity continues the same; his providence is silently and secretly fulfilling his pleasure; and the issue although delayed to the thousandth year, is infallibly certain. Whenever he has poured a little ray of light upon the future, and directed the human eye to follow it, and the human tongue to declare it, the event has justified the prediction; and the inference is irresistible, that while man "knoweth not what a day may bring forth;" God "sees the end from the beginning."

Every thing that is excellent and desirable has it's counterfeit. Revelation has sometimes had her claims denied; and sometimes her majesty imitated; but unaltered by any mode of attack, and disdaining to shrink from inquiry, she submits her pure gold to the crucible of



truth, secure that it shall come brighter from that furnace which detects and consumes baser metals. Some have endeavoured to add to the volume of inspiration, and some to take away from it: and one of the strongest evidences of it's authenticity is, that it remains what it was from the beginning, uninjured by all the hands through which it has passed, and unimpaired by the assaults of all those adversaries, who have in their turns been vanquished by time and by death. Scripture prophecy has been imitated; and the friends of scepticism urge against it, what they profess to deem a counterpart in heathen oracles; and because these were for the most part built upon the chicanery of interested men, they have ungenerously attempted to prove, that all predictions of futurity are founded upon the same basis, rise from the same source, and proceed from cunning on the one hand, and from ignorance and superstition on the other. In entering upon a course of Lectures on Scriptures Prophecy, it can neither be unnecessary nor unprofitable to discriminate between things which essentially differ, but which the art or the ignorance of man has often blended. Our leading object in the present Lecture is this; and we shall, as your time may allow, or circumstances shall dictate, blend with this discussion some remarks respecting the distance between the prophecy and the events predicted in most



instances; as also the uses to which the doctrine of Scripture Prophecy, if it can be established, may be applied. We shall endeavour,

I. To distinguish Scripture Prophecy from heathen oracles.

1. Before this difference is specified, it may be proper to say something respecting the nature and the number of the heathen oracles.

In respect to their NATURE, there has been large discussion, and considerable diversity of opinion. Some writers have ascribed them to the influence of demons; and others altogether to the cunning and artifice of the persons employed to deliver them. While there was indisputably much of the last, I confess that I am also inclined to admit something of the former. I give it only as my *opinion*, upon which, as upon the strength or weakness of every other point advanced in these Lectures, you will form your own judgment, after having candidly weighed the evidences produced, and the reasons assigned. If the existence of evil spirits be admitted, (which cannot now form a subject of discussion whatever it may do hereafter) there is reason to conclude that the heathen world was peculiarly under their influence. The lands which the light of Revelation had not visited, may be considered as the seat of empire to the powers of darkness. There are two reasons why, in some



striking cases, I imagine the answers delivered by the heathen oracles to be prompted by demons.

First, because in some few instances, a knowledge beyond the compass of human ability was displayed. There were two memorable trials made of the veracity of oracles, and admitted by no less an historian than Rollin\*, whose depth of research, accuracy of statement, and fidelity of narration, stand unrivalled. Cræsus commanded his ambassador to ask the oracle, at a stated time determined between them, what the monarch was doing. The oracle of Delphos replied, that “he was causing a tortoise and a lamb to be dressed in a vessel of brass”—which was the fact. At Heliopolis a similar trial was made by the emperor Trajan. He sent a letter sealed up, to which he demanded an answer without it’s being opened. The oracle commanded a blank paper to be folded, sealed, and delivered to him; to the no small surprise of the emperor, who had written nothing in the letter which he had sent to the oracle. It is not necessary to suppose that in general demons have a knowledge of futurity: but in some instances it might be permitted as a punishment for the blindness and idolatry, the pride and supersti-

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\* Rol. Anc. Hist. vol. i. p. 54, preface.



tion of the heathen world. The early Fathers have generally maintained this sentiment; and their opinion ought to have some weight, as they lived near the scene of action, and on the brink of the time in question. Nor is a partial impulse upon the minds of men by evil spirits more extraordinary or unreasonable, than the possession which in the time of our Lord prevailed over the bodies of men; and the doctrine of actual possession has never, in my mind, been overthrown.

Secondly, heathen oracles ceased at an early stage of the propagation of Christianity; an instance, as I conceive, of the fall of the kingdom of Satan. This sentiment has been opposed, and it has been asserted, that their cessation was gradual, and that they fell into disrepute as the superior light of Christianity extended, but not for a considerable time after it's prevalence in the world. It has been said that the emperor Julian consulted them; which he could not do except they had been in existence long after the preaching of Christianity. But it has been proved that Julian "had recourse to magical operations," quite a distinct thing from the consultation of oracles, and that it was "because oracles had already ceased: for he bewailed the loss of them, and assigned weak reasons for that loss, which St. Cyrill has vigorously



“ refuted; adding *that he never could have offer-*  
“ *ed such, but from an unwillingness to acknow-*  
“ *ledge, that when the world had received the light*  
“ *of Christ, the dominion of the Devil was at an*  
“ *end\*.*” It has been further added, as an evi-  
dence that heathen oracles continued after the  
propagation of Christianity, that the Christian  
emperors issued laws against them; but it has  
also been justly observed, that “ the edicts of  
“ those princes do not prove that oracles ac-  
“ tually existed in their times, any more than  
“ that they ceased in consequence of their laws;”  
and that “ it is certain that these oracles were,  
“ for the most part, extinct before the conver-  
“ sion of Constantine.” The superstition and  
predilection of the multitude for oracles might  
exist long after the oracles themselves; for men  
slowly resign prejudices of all sorts, and reli-  
gious prejudices especially. The laws of these  
emperors were designed probably to subdue  
these prejudices, or at least to controul their in-  
jurious operation. The evidences on both sides  
ought to be carefully examined and impartially  
balanced; and it is probable, that facts have  
been seen magnified or diminished according to  
the prejudices of respective writers on both sides  
of the question. Tertullian offers that any  
Christian, on pain of death, shall engage to

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\* See Encyc. Brit. b. xiii. P. 1. Art. Oracle.



make these oracles confess themselves demons \*. Juvenal speaks of the cessation of the Delphian oracle †. Lucan bears the same testimony ‡. Theodoret speaks of the decline of the same oracle; and it's reputed answer to the consultations of Julian is well known §. “ Tell the  
 “ king—the well-constructed palace is fallen to  
 “ the ground:—Phœbus has neither a cottage,  
 “ nor the prophetic laurel, nor the speaking  
 “ fountain;—and even the beautiful water is  
 “ extinct.”

But although we ascribe some of these oracles to the agency of demons, we are willing to allow that the most of them were the productions of art and cunning. It is universally admitted that the Delphian priestess suffered herself to be corrupted by presents, and framed her answers accordingly. Demosthenes publicly accused the Pythian oracle of being bribed to speak in fa-

\* Nisi se dæmones confessi fuerint, Christiano mentiri non audentes, ibidem illius Christiani procacissimi sanguinem fundite, *Tertull. Apologet. p. 24. Lutet. edit. 1634.*

† — Delphis oracula cessant. *Juv. Sat. vi. l. 554.*

‡ Non ullo secula dono

Nostra carent majore Deum, quam Delphica sedes  
 Quod siluit. *Luc. Lib. v.*

§ Εἰπατε τῷ βασιλεῖ, χαμαὶ πέσει δαίδαλος αἰλά,  
 Οὐκέτι Φοῖβος ἔχει καλύβαν, ἔ μαντίδα δάφνην,  
 Οὐ πάγαν λαλέεσαν, ἀπέσβετο καὶ καλὸν ὕδωρ.

See Potter's *Antiq. of Greece*, Vol. 1. Chap. 9. p. 282:



vour of Philip ; and charged the Athenians to give no credit to her \*.

With regard to NUMBER, they were so multiplied that it will not be possible to do more than to recapitulate a few leading features, which have been traced by various writers, of the principal of them. The most considerable was the oracle of Apollo at Delphos, an ancient city of Phocis in Achaia, situated upon a declivity about the middle of Mount Parnassus, and surrounded by precipices.

The oracle of Dodona † was consecrated to Jupiter : who is also deemed the father of oracles ; although he yielded in the renown and popularity of his predictions to the Delphian Apollo. The mode of answering inquiries at this seat of superstition, appears to have been, by hanging certain instruments on the tops of oaks, which when shaken by the wind gave a confused sound, the priests interpreting the noise as they thought proper.

\* He said that “ *the Pythoness Philippised.*”

† Respecting this place there has been much controversy. Some place it in Thessaly, and some in Epirus. Those who adhere to Epirus, doubt whether it was in Thesprotia, or Chaonia. Some contend that there were two Dodona's : one in Thessaly and one in Epirus. Rollin calls it a city of the Molossians ; and Archbishop Potter, after stating these different opinions, seems to agree with him.



The oracles of Trophonius in Bæotia, were also held in high estimation. After much ceremony the inquirers entered the cave, whence they returned melancholy and listless, stupified possibly by some vapour which might arise within it, and were a considerable time before they recovered, having, as they imagined, seen and heard wonderful things.

The whole amount of oracles in more or less repute in the heathen world, is estimated at not fewer than three hundred. It would be a wanton waste of your time to enlarge upon the different characters and pretensions of these; especially as they are all inferior and subordinate to those which we have named, and selected as a specimen of the whole. But it is of more importance that we should mark,

2. The Distinctions subsisting between the best and wisest of these Oracles, and Scripture Prophecy. They are dissimilar in every leading point; and their highest pretensions, on the testimony of the history of their times, can never rank with the claims and the evidences of the sacred predictions.

The first distinction which I shall mark relates to the MANNER of their delivery. When the Priestess had passed through the preparatory ceremonies, and had inhaled the celebrated vapour over which her tripod was placed,



her gestures and sensations amounted to absolute madness. A trembling shook her whole frame: her looks were wild and distracted; she foamed at the mouth; her hair became erect; her shrieks and howlings filled the temple; and heathen historians add, that the building itself shook to its very foundations. During these fearful agitations, at certain intervals, unconnected words fell from her lips. These were carefully collected by the priests who surrounded her, and from them the oracle was framed. These distortions and this vehemence, were not peculiar to the priestess of Delphos, but seem universally to characterize heathen oracles. Lycophron represents Cassandra as infuriate in the same measure as this Pythian priestess is described by Lucan \*. Heraclitus says that “the declamations of the Sibyl were indecorous and ridiculous,” and that they were pronounced from a “raving mouth †.” Ammianus Marcellinus speaks of this violence as a proverbial notoriety ‡. Virgil describes, with his wonted force and eloquence, the vehemence and mad-

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\* See also Lucan, lib. v.

† Ὡς μαινομένῳ σώματι γελασὰ καὶ ἀκαλλώπιστα φθεγγομένη.

‡ Sibyllæ crebro se dicunt ardere, torrente vi magnâ flammæ.  
Amm. Marc. lib. xxi. in principio.

Consult on this subject, Rollin, vol. i. pref. Potter's Antiq. of Greece, vol. i. 278. Bp. Watson's Theolog. Tracts, vol. i. p. 314.



ness of the prophetess\*. It required several days, after she was re-conducted to her cell, to recover her from her fatigue, and to restore her exhausted frame to it's wonted vigour. Sometimes her life was the forfeit of her exertions; and this excessive raving was followed by sudden death.

To this madness stands opposed the calm and dignified manners of the prophets, when they foretold future events. It is true that they were elevated by the majesty of their subject. They were wrapt and inspired by the visions of the Almighty. They were moved with pity or with indignation, when men trifled with the judgments pronounced. Sanctioned by the usages of the times, and transported by the force of their commission, they rent their clothes and their hair; they stamped with their foot, and smote upon their thigh. But they maintained the calm possession of all their faculties; and never discovered the characteristics of a maniac. They were zealous, but not furious: and their energy was distinct from raving. I cannot but think that God himself marks strongly the contrast between the manner of delivering oracles, and the calm possession of their reasoning facul-

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\* See Virgil's *Æn.* lib. vi. v. 46—51. For extracts and general evidences consult the notes at the end of this Lecture.



ties, the majesty, the truth of his prophets. “ I am the Lord that maketh all things, and “ stretcheth forth the heavens alone, that “ spreadeth abroad the earth by myself. That “ frustrateth the tokens of liars, *and maketh di- “ viners mad*; that turneth wise men backward, “ and maketh their knowledge foolish: That “ confirmeth the word of my servant, and per- “ formeth the counsel of my messengers\*.” In one word, the pronouncers of oracles were always transported out of themselves; and the prophets of the Lord always preserved a noble tranquillity of deportment.

The second distinction which I shall point out relates to the TIME of their delivery. The oracles were issued only at stated periods. Their gods were not always propitious. At first the priestess of Delphos could be approached but once a year: afterwards she was accessible monthly. All days were not deemed proper; and upon some no answer could be obtained. Alexander wished to consult the oracle upon one of those unpropitious days: but was absolutely refused by the priestess. The conqueror of the world did not understand ceremony; and thought that “ nice customs should stoop to “ great kings.” He dragged the struggling

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\* Isa. xliv. 24—26.



priestess, and seated her by force on the tripod, while she exclaimed, “ My son thou art invincible;” and Alexander declared that she might spare herself farther trouble, for *that* was an oracle intirely to his satisfaction \*. We have already seen, that as force could command the time, gold could occasionally dictate the answer; and this is a consideration worthy to be remarked and remembered ; and which we shall not pass by as we pursue the distinctions evidently subsisting between this corrupted superstition and Scripture Prophecy.

Respecting the prophets of the Lord, we find none of this caution. No seasons were improper. They were always accessible ; and to the devout inquirer God was always propitious. There was no delay attending the answer. Either he disdained to notice the application at all, when it came from such a character as Saul, whose iniquities had separated him from the divine favour : or the direction was vouchsafed immediately. Rank and wealth had no influence in framing the answer. The poor were often filled with joy, while the rich were sent empty away. Unrighteous kings were reprovèd with the fidelity,

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\* On this point consult Plutarch, Græc. quæst. 9. Anc. Univ. Hist. vol. v. b. 1. note F. p. 610. Dublin edit. 1745. Potter’s Antiq. vol. 1. chap. 9. p. 278. For the anecdote see Rollin’s Anc. Hist. vol. 1. p. 51. Preface; and Enc. Brit. vol. xiii. Pt. I. Art. *Oracle*.



the plainness, and the severity of truth; and the prophets not unfrequently passed from the royal presence into a prison as a punishment for their sincerity. They often suffered, but they never stooped to flatter.

The Third distinction relates to the PLACE where they were delivered. The heathen oracles were delivered in secret and obscure places, in by-ways, in dark caverns, and from the inmost recesses of temples. Who does not perceive that such places were favourable to fraud? and that these very circumstances are of themselves sufficient to awaken suspicion? All was as mysterious and as blinded as possible. Pausanias, who consulted in person the oracle of Trophonius, after a long description of the ablutions and services previously required represents at large the circumstances in which he was placed. He speaks of the visible and outward cave, not as a natural cavity, but as “built  
“ with the nicest mechanism and proportion.” The entrance of this cavern has no steps, but the person who wishes to consult the oracle must provide himself with a light and narrow ladder: and having descended this external cavern, which may be considered as a porch to the oracle, the cave itself of Trophonius is situated “between the roof and the pavement.”  
“ At the mouth of this, the descendant, having



“ brought with him cakes dipped in honey, lies  
 “ along on the ground, and shoves himself feet  
 “ foremost into the cave ; then he thrusts in  
 “ his knees ; after which the rest of his body  
 “ is rolled along, by a force not unlike that of  
 “ a great and rapid river, which overpowering  
 “ a man with it's vortex, tumbles him over  
 “ head and ears. All that come within the ap-  
 “ proach of the oracle, have not their answers  
 “ revealed the same way. Some gather their  
 “ resolves by outward appearances ; others by  
 “ word of mouth. They all return the same  
 “ way back with their feet foremost\*.” None  
 ever lost their lives in this cavern, except one  
 man, who meant to rob the sanctuary of the  
 wealth deposited there by the superstitious.  
 Every one returns, bewildered and stupified from  
 some cause, from the cave. This is the testi-  
 mony of Pausanias ; and it is sufficiently ex-  
 plicit to discover how much of art and of chi-  
 canery might be practised, in a place so con-  
 structed, upon those, who, being prepared for  
 something supernatural, requires very little to  
 strengthen the delusion which their imagination  
 was of itself ready to impose upon their senses.

Scripture Prophecy forms a striking and noble  
 contrast to these pitiful expedients. Here was

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\* Abp. Potter's Antiq. of Greece, vol. i. p. 291.



no collusion, and no mystery. No cheat was attempted or practised on the senses. There were no secret avenues, no dark recesses, no obscure retreats. All was open as the day. The prophets delivered their messages wherever and whenever they were required, and in the face of the world. Sometimes the predictions were delivered in the palaces of rebellious kings, and sometimes in the centre of devoted cities: sometimes in the prophet's house, and at others in the assembly of the Elders: but always openly. Does not God himself allude to this distinction between his own predictions, and the secrecy attending the delivery of heathen oracles, when he says, "*I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth* \*?"

The Fourth distinction relates to the CEREMONIES required and practised in the consultation of oracles. Vast preparations were made on every such occasion. The priestess herself was compelled to fast three days, to bathe in the fountain of Castalia, to drink copiously of the water, to shake the laurel tree that grew on it's brink, and to chew some of it's leaves. Sacrifices that lacked neither splendour nor solemnity were presented, and presented daily, till the omens were favourable and an answer was

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\* Is. xlv. 19.



vouchsafed. Not an iota of the ceremonial prescribed was to be omitted; and a single informality would suspend the whole process, and rendering nugatory all that preceded, compel all the services to recommence\*. All the majesty of form was maintained, but alas! the spirit of religion was not there. It was also expected that those who consulted the oracle should make large presents to the god, whose name sanctioned the avarice of the priests; so that the temple of Delphos surpassed all others in riches, splendour, and magnificence†. Nor was this requisition peculiar to the shrine of Apollo; it was an essential part of the system, throughout the whole heathen world, that whoever would consult the pretended divinity, must fee the selfish priest.

You discern no such parade in the dispensation of Scripture Prophecy. When God was approached, only the usual sacrifices were presented; and he was frequently consulted without any previous offering. When sacrifices were presented it was not with a view to propitiate the Deity, which was the sole object of the ceremonies of the heathens. Till the answer was given the god was adored; and when it was

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\* Rollin's Anc. Hist. vol. i. Pref. Anc. Univ. Hist. vol. v. p. 610.

† Abp. Potter's Antiq. of Greece, vol. i. p. 278, 279.



once obtained he was forgotten. Presents were sometimes sent to the prophets; but these were tokens of personal respect to them, and were not intended as an offering to God. They were never required; and were always refused when they were intended as a recompense to the prophet in his sacred character, or as a reward for the performance of his duty. Thus Elijah refused peremptorily any present from Naaman. Frequently the prophets of the Lord suffered persecution even to death, for the integrity with which they pronounced the truths committed to their trust. No king could corrupt them. Ahab said of Micaiah, "I hate him, for he doth  
" not prophecy good concerning me, but evil." Balaam, whose heart was the seat of avarice, did not dare, so long as God chose to employ him as an instrument, to suffer himself to be corrupted by presents. He was constrained to abjure the gold which he devoured with his wishes, when it was offered as a bribe that he should deliver a favourable oracle. "If Balak would  
" give me his house full of silver and gold, I  
" cannot go beyond the word of the Lord, to  
" do less or more." To what sufferings and imprisonments did Jeremiah's predictions expose him! Samuel at the end of a long administration as a prophet, and as a judge, could say,  
" Behold here I am; witness against me before



“ the Lord and before his anointed; whose ox  
 “ have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or  
 “ whom have I defrauded? whom have I op-  
 “ pressed? or of whose hand have I received  
 “ any *bribe*, to blind mine eyes therewith? and  
 “ I will restore it you. And the people said,  
 “ thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us,  
 “ neither hast thou taken ought of any man’s  
 “ hand. And he said unto them, the Lord is  
 “ witness against you, and his anointed is wit-  
 “ ness this day, that ye have not found ought  
 “ in my hand. And they answered, he is wit-  
 “ ness \*.” Which of the priests that conducted  
 the heathen oracles, could make such an appeal?  
 or produce, like the prophets of the Lord, a  
 palm unstained by bribery?

The Fifth and the grand distinction relates to  
 MATTER. Rollin has with much justice and  
 force given a description of heathen oracles.  
 He says, “ their general characteristics were  
 “ *ambiguity, obscurity, and convertibility* ;” that  
 is to say, the “ answer would agree with several  
 “ various, and sometimes directly opposite events.”  
 The prediction was so framed that whatever  
 should be the issue, the oracle might not lose its  
 credit and popularity. There are two instances  
 in point, which are also generally known; and

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\* 1 Sam. xii. 3—5.



they shall suffice as an illustration of this position. When Cræsus was about to invade the Medes and Persians, he consulted the oracle at Delphos as to the issue of his expedition. The answer was, "that by passing the river Helys, and making war upon the Persians, he would ruin a great empire." What empire? Was his own, or that of the Medes, to be ruined? One of these two opposite events was certain; and in either case the oracle would be right. Men are always ready to believe that which they wish. Cræsus flattered himself that the ruin of the Persians was intended. He made the attempt—lost his crown—and was on the point of losing his life. In like manner when Pyrrhus made war upon the Romans, he consulted the same oracle. With matchless address the answer was couched in a single line in Latin\*, which cannot be so rendered into English as to express the equivocal construction of the original: but from the arrangement of the words, it may be read, either "that Pyrrhus should conquer the Romans;" or "that the Romans should conquer Pyrrhus." The issue is well known: Pyrrhus returned, mortified and defeated, to his country, after a long and disastrous struggle. Tertullian appeals to these in-

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\* Aio te, Æacida, Romanos, vincere posse!



stances in charging the heathen oracles with subtle ambiguity \*; and such was their general character.

The contrast to this darkness and equivocation will be found in the clearness and perspicuity of prophecy, as we pursue the future discussion of this interesting part of divine revelation. In general the prediction is so decisive, that the event appears only a transcript of the prophecy. Language capable of a double or changeable construction, is never employed: and when obscurity hovers over the prophecy, it arises from one of these three causes: either it is not accomplished, and has not received the interpretation of providence: or the history which should elucidate it has perished with the wrecks of time; or we are ignorant of the imagery, the customs, or the language itself, in which it is contained, and to which it relates. Those, therefore, who wish to draw a parallel between Scripture Prophecy and heathen oracles, for the sake of placing them upon the same basis, tracing them to the same source, and condemning them together, are acting unfairly, dishonourably, and dishonestly by Revelation.

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\* In oraculis autem, quo ingenio ambiguitates temperent in eventus, sciunt Cræsi, sciunt Pyrrhi. Tertull. Apologet. p. 24. Lutet. edit. 1634. See also Rollin's Anc. Hist. vol. i. Pref. p. 54. Encyc. Brit. vol. xiii, Part I. Art. *Oracle*.



Having passed over the leading object held in view by the present Lecture, I shall venture to add some reflections to the point announced for discussion, of considerable importance to us, before these preliminary observations are closed; and which, if not considered now, can scarcely find any place in the plan which I have submitted to your attention. At the opening of this discourse I promised, as your time would allow to offer,

II. Some remarks on the distance between the prophecy and the events predicted in most instances. The intention of these observations is simply to illustrate this plain and important position, that the prophecies were delivered before the events which they profess to predict; and at the time which they assert.

1. The prophecies were written before the events which they profess to predict. In order to determine this point it will be necessary to produce a few instances, as a short specimen; and we shall gather them from pages of the sacred writings which are not likely to form any part of our future consideration. We shall also prefer a few, short, unnoticed prophecies, which will better answer our purpose as we have little time to spare to them; and which, as they relate to comparatively small circumstances, we may presume would have escaped the minute



attention of any future historian, had not the event been an extraordinary counterpart of the prediction. But if it can be proved that in subordinate and local predictions the event has precisely corresponded with the prophecy, we may hope the more readily to obtain your assent to those, which are more copious, more notorious, more confirmed, and which will hereafter be produced, for your investigation, in their respective order.

The destruction of the altar of Bethel was predicted in the year before Christ, nine hundred and seventy-five. “And behold, there  
“came a man of God out of Judah, by the  
“word of the Lord, unto Bethel: and Jeroboam  
“stood by the altar to burn incense. And he  
“cried against the altar in the word of the  
“Lord, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the  
“Lord, Behold, a child shall be born unto the  
“house of David, Josiah by name, and upon  
“thee shall he offer the priests of the high  
“places that burn incense upon thee, and men’s  
“bones shall be burned upon thee\*.” An immediate sign was superadded in the withering of Jeroboam’s arm, and in the rending of the altar: and the accomplishment of this prediction was in the year before Christ six hundred

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\* 1 Kings xiii. 1, 2.



and twenty-four: and the interval between the prophecy and it's fulfilment was three hundred and fifty-one years. Josephus makes three hundred and sixty-one years intervene \*. This difference is trifling; but the whole lapse of time is considerable. “ Moreover, the altar that was  
“ at Bethel, and the high place which Jeroboam  
“ the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin,  
“ had made, both that altar and the high place  
“ he broke down, and burned the high place,  
“ and stamped it small to powder, and burned  
“ the grove. And as Josiah turned himself, he  
“ spied the sepulchres that were there in the  
“ mount, and sent and took the bones out of  
“ the sepulchres, and burned them upon the  
“ altar, and polluted it, according to the word  
“ of the Lord, which the man of God proclaim-  
“ ed †.” Without entering into any discussion respecting the exactness of the chronology stated, it is sufficiently apparent, that the accomplishment of the prophecy was remote from the prediction itself; from the acknowledged distance between the reign of Jeroboam and the reign of Josiah.

At the fall of Jericho, doubtless under the impulse of a prophetic spirit, “ Joshua adjured  
“ them, saying, Cursed be the man before the

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\* Jos. Antiq. lib. x. cap. 5.

† 2 Kings xxiii. 15, 16.



“ Lord, that riseth up and buildeth this city  
 “ Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof  
 “ in his first born, and in his youngest son shall  
 “ he set up the gates of it \*.” This sentence  
 was pronounced in the year before Christ one  
 thousand four hundred and fifty-one. We must  
 look for the fulfilment of it, in the year before  
 Christ nine hundred and eighteen. “ In his  
 “ days,” that is, during the reign of Ahab,  
 “ did Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho: he laid  
 “ the foundation thereof in Abiram his first-  
 “ born, and set up the gates thereof in his  
 “ youngest son, Segub, according to the word  
 “ of the Lord, which he spake by Joshua the  
 “ son of Nun †.” Between the prophecy and  
 the event, there is a space of five hundred and  
 thirty-three years. These last passages in their  
 connection, will serve, moreover, to set in a  
 clear point of view, the blessings and cursings  
 pronounced by eminent characters, on certain  
 occasions; and which have exposed them to the  
 censures of some superficial readers, as indicat-  
 ing a selfish, or a revengeful spirit. They had  
 nothing to do with the one temper of mind or  
 the other. They were solemn predictions of that  
 which would be. “ The prophecy came not,  
 “ in old time, by the will of man;” by either

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\* Josh. vi. 26.

† 1 Kings xvi. 34.



his favour or his resentment: “but holy men of  
“God spake as they were moved by the Holy  
“Ghost;” and the event justified their censures  
and their commendations.

So clear and so decisive were the prophecies  
of Daniel, that Porphyry, who compared them  
with the Grecian histories extant in his time,  
unable to resist the fulness of evidence by which  
they were supported, said, that the predictions  
ascribed to this prophet were forgeries, and were  
written *after* the events which they professed to  
foretell. A fine concession is this, on the part  
of the correspondence between the prophecies  
and the event: while the assertion which he  
makes of the fraud, is as weak as it is false.  
Even Grotius, who is the coolest and the most  
candid opponent that infidelity could ask, seems  
to kindle here; and says, “it is the same as if  
“any one should question whether the pro-  
“ductions of Virgil were really written by him,  
“and in the Augustan age: for there never was  
“any more doubt among the Hebrews concern-  
“ing the one, than there was among the Ro-  
“mans respecting the other\*.”

The assertion of Porphyry, that the book of  
Daniel was forged after the time of Antiochus

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\* Grot. de Ver. Relig. Christ. lib. i. sect. 17.



Epiphanes, is so far from being true, that “this  
 “prophecy was translated into Greek more than  
 “one hundred years before, and was in the  
 “hands, not only of the Jews, but of the Egyp-  
 “tians also, inveterate enemies to the whole  
 “Jewish nation\*.” We advance that,

2. The prophecies were written at the time in which they profess themselves to have been delivered. Without referring to chronology and to a comparison of further predictions and histories, we ask of scepticism only those common concessions which are made on all similar occasions: that the testimony of contemporary writers who could have no interest in supporting a fraud, but would have reaped great honour in detecting one, and the general consent of the Jewish nation, be admitted. These are deemed evidences in every other literary point—irresistible evidences—evidences on which we receive as genuine all the writings of antiquity—and why should they be rejected on this subject, and on this subject only? If the same concessions were made to Revelation which are every day made to other productions: if the same allowances were granted to the sacred writers which are given unasked, and without reluctance, to other historians: if the same evidences were ad-

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\* Bp. Watson's Theol. Tracts, vol. i. p. 361.



mitted on the part of the Bible, which ought to be granted, and which are allowed in support of any other book; there would be no longer any controversy, the weapons of infidelity would be laid aside, and the Scriptures would be cordially received

There was never any doubt on the part of the Jewish nation, at any age, of the times when their prophecies were written; nor any hesitation in the admission of the claims of those writings to the dates which they assume. The events of war, of captivity, and of other great concerns of their nation, served to fix and to distinguish the dates of their prophecies and histories. It has been judiciously and truly remarked, that three leading circumstances, collected from the internal evidence of the different prophets themselves, illustrate and confirm this observation. “ First, that the authors who  
 “ lived *after* the carrying away of the Jews into  
 “ Babylon, make use of some *Chaldee* terms,  
 “ which are not to be found in the *foregoing*  
 “ prophets; for we may see in the books of  
 “ Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, the same  
 “ style with Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel. Se-  
 “ condly, the authors of these books give names  
 “ to the months, which they had not before the  
 “ captivity: for before that era, the Jews only  
 “ gave the names of first, second, third, &c. to



“ their months. Thirdly, the authors of these  
 “ prophecies take particular notice of any newly  
 “ instituted fasts; thus we see that the pro-  
 “ phet Haggai mentioned those fasts of which  
 “ we have nothing in the law, but which were  
 “ instituted during the captivity \*.” Thus, the  
 very style of the respective prophets, independ-  
 ently of external evidences, will, when accu-  
 rately investigated, determine the periods in  
 which they wrote.

There are many things in the prophecies, es-  
 pecially the calling of the Gentiles, which opposed  
 Jewish prejudices, and thwarted them in those  
 principles of which they were most tenacious:  
 surely an impostor, or a band of impostors, who  
 should sit down to forge oracles, would have  
 adapted them better to the taste of their country.  
 And why was imposition confined only to certain  
 ages? Why did it not survive the year of the  
 world three thousand five hundred and fifty-  
 three? Why have there been no impostors, no  
 successful pretensions to prophecy, since Mala-  
 chi, among a people who for eight ages were ce-  
 lebrated for the splendour and accuracy of their  
 predictions †? Let scepticism consider and an-  
 swer these difficulties.

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\* Bp. Watson's Theol. Tracts, vol. i. p. 365.

† Bp. Watson's Theol. Tracts, vol. i. p. 370, 371.



We proceed no farther upon this subject: but it may be asked, why we are so anxious to prove the truth of Scripture Prophecies; and to what use they can be applied if we carry our point in establishing them? They will elucidate and place beyond the shadow of doubt some of the most important subjects that ever presented themselves to the human mind.

1. The Doctrine of Providence. There is not a doctrine more absurd in itself, or more pernicious to the interests of mankind, than the doctrine of chance. It is absurd to imagine that God should create the world and abandon the government of it: that he should form beings wholly and intirely dependant upon himself, and then withdraw his support from them. It is pernicious to human morals, and to human society, to insinuate that God has no superintendance over the affairs of men, and that they have no responsibility to him. It is a degrading representation of the Deity to assert, that, supremely happy in himself, he disregards the felicity of his creatures; and that infinitely secure, he leaves them alone on the troubled deeps of life, tossed from wave to wave, the sport of adverse and of ungovernable winds. It is not true. He abandons not the little ark that contains the human race, as it floats upon a tempestuous sea. He did not launch yonder



worlds with an omnipotent arm, till he had prescribed their orbits with infinite skill. The doctrine of divine superintendence stimulates exertion. A man labours with spirit proportionate to his expectation of success. If the issue be left to chance, he may well despair: but if it be in the hands of providence, which will undoubtedly produce the end best adapted to his interests, he has an object before him of unspeakable moment, and he will pursue the use of the means with increasing vigour. Scripture Prophecy once established, is a decisive and resistless demonstration of the existence, the agency, and the wisdom of divine providence.

2. The Connection of the Sacred Writings. Because they were composed at distinct periods, and by different persons, they are too often considered as disunited, and are read separately, and examined partially. It is most true, that they were the work of several ages: that there could not be any thing like collusion, or secret understanding, between writers who were removed centuries from each other: but it is also true that there is an harmony of all their parts, and an union which is as indissoluble as it is wonderful. Like a well-constructed edifice, it is impossible to remove a single stone, without deranging the order, destroying the beauty, and affecting the stability of the whole. Prophecy



and history alternately elucidate and confirm each other. Here I am convinced of the truth of the prophecy, by the history of its accomplishment; there I am satisfied that the leading features of the history are genuine, by their correspondence with the prediction. I cannot doubt, on the one hand, that the prophecy was a revelation of the omniscient God; nor on the other, that the event was under divine superintendence; when I discern the last to be the very image and reflection of the first. I am able to trace the unbroken line which runs through the intire volume: which not only unites the Old and the New Testaments, but also links all their several parts together. I trace them all to the same origin, and say—"God, who at sundry  
" times, and in divers manners, spake in time  
" past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in  
" these last days spoken unto us by his Son." I am unable to withhold my assent to the authority and the claims of such a volume, so harmonious and so supported.

3. A presumptive evidence in favour of Miracles is deducible from the establishment of Scripture Prophecy. If it can be clearly and satisfactorily proved, that prophecies delivered a considerable time before the events themselves took place, were actually and precisely accomplished, there will remain no objection against



miracles which may not be applied to prophecy; and the removal of them in the one case, is the overthrow of them in the other, by a parity of reasoning. Is a miracle defined to be “an extraordinary operation, above the power of all created beings, and performable by God alone?” So is prophecy. Is it the result of omniscience and of omnipotence, in their combined influence? So is prophecy and its accomplishment. Is it impossible for a miracle to be wrought without the immediate interposition of Deity? It is equally impossible for a creature to foreknow or to predict future events; and to roll round the wheel of providence, so as to cause those events precisely to correspond with the prediction. Is it more extraordinary for a man to open the eyes of the blind, or to heal the sick, or to raise the dead, than to foretell events, concealed in the womb of futurity, and contrary, in every respect, to the features of the times, and to the aspect of the world, at the moment when such predictions are pronounced? Here they undoubtedly occupy the same ground. Miracles and prophecy are alike above all human agency, alike depend upon the interposition of God; and if the one be proved, the other is more than credible. Prophecy is, then, a standing miracle. If God has indeed stepped out of his way, so to speak, to unveil



the eyes of man, and to open them upon the secrets of futurity, what reasoning can be produced to prove that he has not communicated, for the same wise ends, to a creature, the power of producing operations above human ability, and contrary to the established and general laws of nature? In both cases those laws are alike suspended, or exceeded. Is it more incredible that God should impart supernatural power, than that he should bestow supernatural light? I think not. And the confirmation of prophecy is of importance as it may assist a future inquiry into the evidence of miracles. Above all, the establishment of Scripture Prophecy, will be another evidence that this volume is inspired. And till the pretensions of Revelation are totally overthrown, is scepticism safe in treating them with derision? What, if they should be true!—Is it wise to demand a triumph before the battle is won? We shall pursue our inquiries into the claims of the Scriptures, without regarding the affectation of superiority assumed by those who reject them; just reminding them, in the mean time, of the reasonable advice of a king of Israel; “Let not him that girdeth on his armour, boast himself as he that putteth it off.”



## NOTES.

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### NOTES TO THE SECOND LECTURE.

ARCHBISHOP POTTER agrees with the observations of the preceding Lecture as to the source of oracles; at least, it is to be inferred that he is unwilling to consider them as mere chicanery, from the following observation. “As to the causes of oracles, it has  
“ been disputed whether they were the revelations of Dæmons, or  
“ only the delusions of crafty priests. Van Dale has wrote a large  
“ treatise in defence of the *latter* opinion, but his arguments are *not*  
“ of such force but that they might *without difficulty be refuted*, if  
“ either my design required, or time permitted me to answer  
“ them.”

*Abp. Potter's Antiq. of Greece, vol. i. ch. vii. p. 263.*

The same author notices the necessity of propitiating the god by presents. “Whoever went to consult the oracle was required to  
“ make large presents to the god; whereby it came to pass, that this  
“ temple” (of Delphos) “in riches, splendour, and magnificence,  
“ was superior almost to all others in the world. And *Aphetoria*  
“ *opes* (so called from *Αφύτρες*, a name of Apollo, given him, as  
“ some say, from sending forth oracles) have been proverbially used  
“ for abundance of wealth. Another thing required of those that  
“ desired answers was, that they should propound their questions in  
“ as few words as might be, as we are informed by Philostratus, in  
“ the life of Apollonius. It was the custom also, to *offer sacrifices*  
“ to Apollo, in which, except the omens were favourable, the pro-  
“ phetess would not give any answer. At these sacrifices there were  
“ five priests, saith Plutarch, named *Οσίοι*, i. e. *Holy*, that assisted  
“ the prophets, and performed many other offices with them, being  
“ supposed to be descended from Deucalion. There was one also  
“ who presided over these, called *Οσιωτὴς*, or *Purifier*; though



“ Plutarch saith, that the sacrifice slain, when any of the *Οσίοι*  
 “ were declared, was called by that name; unless instead of *τὸ*  
 “ *θυόμενον ἱερεῖον*, or the sacrifice killed, we might be allowed to  
 “ read *τὸν θυόμενον ἱερεῖον*, or the person killed the sacrifice. There  
 “ was another priest also, that assisted the prophetess in managing  
 “ the oracle, whom they called *Αφήτορ*, upon the same account that  
 “ Apollo was so named.”

*Abp. Potter's Antiq. of Greece, vol. i. c. 9. p. 279.*

That these presents were to be costly, and that, unlike the effects  
 produced by the fidelity of Scripture Prophecy, oracles proved to  
 those who were employed in delivering them a source of honour and  
 emolument, is distinctly stated by this same writer, when he says,  
 upon the authority of Strabo,—“ My author goes yet higher,  
 “ and tells us, that inspired persons were thought worthy  
 “ of the greatest honour and trusts; insomuch that sometimes we  
 “ find them advanced to the throne, and invested with regal power;  
 “ for that being admitted to the counsels of the gods, they were  
 “ best able to provide for the safety and welfare of mankind. This  
 “ reputation stood the priests (who had their dependance on the  
 “ oracles) in no small stead; for finding their credit thus thoroughly  
 “ established, they allowed no man to consult their gods, before he  
 “ had offered costly sacrifices, and made rich presents to them;  
 “ whereby it came to pass, that few beside great and wealthy men  
 “ were admitted to ask their advice, the rest being unable to defray  
 “ the charges required on that account; which contributed very  
 “ much to raise the esteem of oracles among the common people;  
 “ men generally being apt to admire the things they are kept  
 “ at some distance from; and on the other hand to condemn  
 “ what they are familiarly acquainted with. Wherefore to keep up  
 “ their esteem with the better sort, even they were only admitted  
 “ upon a few stated days; at other times neither the greatest prince  
 “ could purchase, nor persons of the greatest quality any ways obtain  
 “ an answer. Alexander himself was peremptorily denied by the  
 “ Pythia, till she was by downright force compelled to ascend the  
 “ Tripus, when finding herself unable to resist any longer, she cried  
 “ out *Ανίκητος εἶ*, *Thou art invincible!* which words were thought a  
 “ very lucky omen, and accepted instead of a further oracle.”

*Abp. Potter's Antiq. of Greece, vol. i. c. 7. p. 263.*



There are not wanting instances in which the priestess proved less scrupulous than on this memorable occasion with Alexander; and when corruption was sufficiently notorious to justify what has been advanced in the preceding lecture relative to the power of gold in obtaining and in dictating an answer, with all imaginable facility.

I will further venture to intrude upon the reader some extracts corroborative of that which has been advanced respecting the distraction of the priestess. The same writer observes, on this subject, as well as upon the preparatory ceremonies—" The Pythia, before  
 " she ascended the Tripus, used to wash her whole body, especially  
 " her hair, in Castalis, a fountain at the foot of Parnassus, where the  
 " poets, men inspired by the same Deity, used to wash and drink.  
 " At her first sitting down upon the Tripus, she used to shake the  
 " laurel-tree that grew by it, and sometimes to eat the leaves.  
 " Herself also, and the Tripus, were crowned with garlands of the  
 " same plant, as we learn from the Scholiast upon Aristophanes, at  
 " this verse, where one asketh,

“ Τί δ᾽ ἤθ' ὁ Φοῖβος ἔλαχεν ἐκ στεμμάτων ;

“ What from the oracle with garlands trimm'd

“ Has Phœbus utter'd ?

“ Nor did the Pythia only make use of laurel in this manner, but  
 “ other prophets also, it being thought to conduce to inspiration;  
 “ whence it was peculiarly called *μαντικὸν φυτόν*, the prophetic  
 “ plant. The Pythia, being placed upon the Tripus, received the  
 “ divine *afflatus* in her belly; whence she is called, *ἐγαστήρυμθος*, or  
 “ *σεννόμαντις*. She was no sooner inspired, but she began imme-  
 “ diately to swell, and foam at the mouth, tearing her hair, cutting  
 “ her flesh, and in all her other behaviour appearing like one phrene-  
 “ tic and distracted. But she was not always affected in the same  
 “ manner; for, if the spirit was in a kind and gentle humour, her  
 “ rage was not very violent; but, if sullen and malignant, she was  
 “ thrown into extreme fury; insomuch that Plutarch speaks of one  
 “ enraged to such a degree, that she affrighted, not only those that  
 “ consulted the oracle, but the priests themselves, who ran away and  
 “ left her; and so violent was the paroxysm, that in a little time  
 “ after she died. Some say, that under the Tripus sometimes ap-



“ peared a *Dragon* that returned answers, and that the *Pythia* was  
 “ once killed by him. And Eusebius reports, δράκοντα εἰλεῖσθαι  
 “ περὶ τὸν τρίποδα, *that a SERPENT rolled himself about the tripod.*”

*Abp. Potter's Antiq. of Greece, vol. i. c. 9. p. 278.*

It is impossible to read this account of the convulsive agonies of the priestess of Apollo, without being reminded of those violent and distressing symptoms of dæmoniacal possession, in the days of our Lord, recorded by the different Evangelists, especially Matt. viii. 28, &c. Mark v. 2—5. ix. 18, 19, 26.

The testimony of Virgil confirms all that has been advanced respecting the distraction of the priestess, when he thus describes the Sybil at the moment when Æneas consulted the oracle:

“ Cui talia fanti,  
 “ Ante fores, subito non voltus, non color, unus,  
 “ Non comæ mansere comæ; sed pectus anhelum,  
 “ Et rabie fera corda tument; majorque videri,  
 “ Nec mortale sonans; adflata est numine quando  
 “ Jam propiore dei.”

*Virg. Æneid. lib. vi. v. 46—51. tom. II. p. 65. Wakefield's edit.*

The contrast between the phrenzy of diviners and the calm dignity of the prophets, has been distinctly marked by Chrysostom, whose testimony has been quoted by John Smith in his discourse on prophecy already referred to; after many opinions selected from the Fathers, he says, “ I shall add but one author more, and that is  
 “ Chrysostome, who hath very fully and excellently laid down this  
 “ difference between the true and false prophets. Hom. 29. on the  
 “ first epistle to the Corinthians: Τὸ τοῦ μάντεως ἴδιον, τὸ ἐξεσηκέναι,  
 “ τὸ ἀνάκην ὑπομένειν, τὸ ὠθεῖσθαι, τὸ ἔλκεσθαι ὥπερ μαινόμενον.  
 “ It is the property of a diviner to be ecstatical, to undergo some vio-  
 “ lence, to be tossed and hurried about like a madman. Ὁ δὲ προφήτης  
 “ ἔχ' ἔτως, ἀλλὰ μετὰ διανοίας νηφέσης, καὶ σωφρονέσης καλῆς ἀσέως,  
 “ καὶ εἰδὼς ὃ φθέγγεται φησὶν ἀπαντα, *But it is otherwise with a pro-*  
 “ *phet, whose understanding is awake, and his mind in a sober and*  
 “ *orderly temper, and he knows every thing that he saith.*”

*Bp. Watson's Theolog. Tracts, vol. iv. p. 315.*



I have purposely refrained from making extracts from Rollin, in the hope that some young persons may be induced to consult for themselves his instructive and entertaining ancient history. The style and constant quotations of Abp. Potter\*, being less attractive, I have selected what appears to me most important relative to the preceding Lecture, from the mass of heavy literature and valuable information thrown together in his volumes. Those who are curious to be more particularly acquainted with the celebrated cave of Trophonius may find a long account of it extracted from Pausanias and Plutarch by Abp. Potter, in his *Antiquities of Greece*, volume the first, chapter the tenth, from the 290th to the 293d page inclusive. Their narratives are too long to be admitted into this note, and are the less necessary because of the minute description given of it in the preceding Lecture, together with an extract relative to the most important particulars, from the testimony of Pausanias, by the Archbishop.

Where so much of imposture was manifest, (whatever other influence might at times be exerted) we cannot wonder that among men of understanding and literature, oracles should, at length, sink into disrepute. Both the Platonists and Stoicks treated them with neglect bordering upon contempt. I will only adduce one extract from Smith's discourse on prophecy, cited in the former Lecture, and preserved in Bp. Watson's *Theological Tracts*. After some remarks on the opinions of the Platonists, relative to this subject, he adds—  
 “ Likewise the Stoicks will scarce allow their wise men at any time  
 “ to consult an oracle, as we may learn from Arrian, lib. ii. c. 7.  
 “ and Epictetus, c. 39. and Simplicius's comment thereupon; where  
 “ that great philosopher, making a scrupulous search what those  
 “ things were which it might be fit to consult the oracle about, at  
 “ last brings them into so narrow a compass, that a wise man shall  
 “ never find occasion to honour the oracle with his presence. A fa-  
 “ mous instance whereof we have in Lucan, lib. ix. where Cato,  
 “ being advised to consult Jupiter Hammon's Oracle after Pompey's  
 “ death, answers,

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\* The same remark will apply with equal force to Smith's *Discourse on Prophecy*.



- " Estnè Dei sedes nisi terra, et pontus, et aër  
 " Et cœlum et virtus? Superos quid quærimus ultra?  
 " Jupiter est quodcunque vides, quocunque moveris.  
 " Sortilegis egeant dubii semperque futuris  
 " Casibus ancipites; me non oracula certum,  
 " Sed mors certa facit——"

*Bp. Watson's Theolog. Tracts, vol. iv. p. 313.*



## LECTURE III.

## THE PROPHECY RELATING TO THE ARABS.

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GEN. XVI. 11, 12.

*And the Angel of the Lord said unto her, Behold thou art with child, and shalt bear a Son, and shalt call his name Ishmael: because the Lord hath heard thy affliction. And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man; and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.*

**I**MAGINE to yourselves a number of men with minds divested of prejudice, opening the sacred volume, to read it with care and with attention. Such is it's variety, and such it's beauty, that it will interest each of them in his own peculiar way: but to some it will appear infinitely more important than to others. The SCHOLAR will find in it some of the most sublime specimens of eastern composition. The



ANTIQUARIAN will prize precious fragments, snatched from the destroying hand of time, rescued from barbarous pillage, surviving the ruins of empires, and transmitted to the present age, while a thousand other works of later date have been consigned to oblivion. The POET will meet here, bold and striking images, vivid and impressive figures of speech, lofty and magnificent descriptions, which he may look for in vain among the first of the Greek and Roman classics. Here the SPECULATIST may discern the most curious and sublime truths brought down to the standard of the plainest understanding; a system elevated beyond the utmost stretch of human comprehension, finding it's way to the human heart: mysterious and unsearchable points rendered familiar and intelligible: a wide and inviting field opened for the exertion of every mental faculty. The MAN OF TASTE AND OF FEELING, will be gratified by the exhibition which is made of manly eloquence, of exquisite sensibility, of unaffected sentiment, of true refinement. The LOVER OF HISTORY will discover authentic records of the most remote and the most interesting events, written with a noble simplicity, and possessing the utmost perspicuity. Departed generations are recalled and return, with their manners and customs. The lives and characters of the great



and the good are drawn with fidelity and with impartiality. Sometimes he will be presented with the *biography of individuals*. He will see a great mind encountering a variety of circumstances, struggling with adversity, or withstanding the more dangerous insinuations of prosperity. In every scene he will be able to pierce his very bosom; and in life or in death, the recesses of his heart are alike laid open. Every sphere of human life is accessible; and the Prince, the Lawgiver, and the Shepherd, present themselves in their turn. Sometimes he will be surrounded by *domestic scenes*; and will sit down in the bosom of a family. He will witness their divisions and their reconciliations, their failings, and their excellencies, their joys and their sufferings—in a word he will become one of them. Sometimes the concerns of *a nation* will burst upon his imagination. He will be made acquainted with the sources of dominion, the windings of power, and the hidden springs of national decay. Thus also the STATESMAN will be interested. He may learn many a lesson of wisdom, and draw many a wholesome truth, from these pages. The best and wisest legislators have made the code of laws, relating both to government and morality, contained in this volume, the standard by which their own constitution has been framed: nor have they deviated from this model without



manifest disadvantage; except indeed when the unavoidable changes of customs and of manners, and the dissimilarity of countries and of climes, have required alterations. To the PHILOSOPHER the secret springs of the human heart will be laid open. An acquaintance with men and things, beyond the sphere of human investigation, is displayed here. The movements of the mind, the influence of the passions, every rude and every tender emotion, is uncovered before him, and submitted to his penetration. THOSE THAT ADMIRE THE MARVELLOUS may also have their taste gratified, and that not at the expense of truth. Unparalleled wonders are narrated. They bear no marks of fiction: but they carry irresistible features of veracity. They are related with simplicity; and are confirmed abundantly by internal, and by external evidences. We are producing in their order some of the singular events which abound here. There are both miracles and prophecies; and, to impress the heart the more, the reader is *himself* interested in them. It will be seen, both in the discussion of this evening, and in some future exercises, that some of the prophecies, which are to pass before you, continue in force to the present hour, and have therefore the advantage of evidences still existing. But what are the emotions with which the different characters,



whom we have enumerated, will consult this volume, to the feelings with which THE CHRISTIAN will read it? Their taste is gratified; but his wants are supplied. Their imagination is fired, and their judgment is informed; but his heart is warmed, and his mind is relieved. To them the throne of God may be a seat of terror; to him it is a throne of grace. A mind at ease seeks entertainment; a wounded spirit pants for repose. The one may consult this volume from curiosity, or, at best, for instruction; the other will read it for his life—his present peace, and his future happiness, alike depend upon what he finds here. It is with the feelings, the views, and the advantage of this last character, that we earnestly desire you should examine the Scriptures.

In a plan which professedly aims at selection, we must of necessity pass over many predictions worthy attention, merely because they will not accord with our design; and produce only those which are most prominent, and which will best elucidate that evidence in favour of Revelation which arises out of prophecy. Among these, it is impossible not to recollect the language of Noah respecting his youngest son; whose posterity in every age have felt the operation of the sentence passed upon their father; and their circumstances have decidedly proved that the



curse pronounced by the patriarch against Ham, was no ebullition of momentary rage, but the clear and calm annunciation of a prophetic spirit. Not to name the Canaanites, the Egyptians, the Tyrians, and the Carthaginians, the descendants of Ham, who yielded in succession to the Israelites, the Persians, the Grecians, and the Romans, the posterity of his brethren—the malediction has not yet ceased to pursue them. The Continent of Africa was peopled by the children of Ham, and it continues the mart of slavery to the whole world. I may speak with the greater freedom on this point, as my own country has rolled the reproach from her bosom. Does any one ask a present evidence of the truth and the accomplishment of Scripture Prophecy? Let him examine the twenty-fifth verse of the ninth chapter of the book of Genesis; and there he will read “Cursed be Canaan\* ; a servant of “servants shall he be to his brethren.” Let him then turn his eyes upon yonder African, who is a sad witness to it’s truth, at the close of four thousand one hundred and fifty-four years from the period when this prediction was delivered. Snatched from his country, separated from his wife and his children, compressed into a space

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\* For the substitution of Canaan for Ham, see Note 1. at the end of this Lecture.



almost too narrow for the springs of existence to play as he crosses the waves that waft him for ever, from every object that communicated a pulse of joy to his heart, he is dragged to a foreign market as a beast of burden, and sold to suffer and to sustain all the horrors of slavery. In vain he turns his eyes and stretches his hands towards the shores of his native land which have disappeared; in vain he calls upon his family, or implores pity from his taskmasters; the winds scatter his lamentations, and the insensible ocean drinks his tears. While he labours under the scorching noon, or is chilled by the damps of the night, nothing is left to alleviate the bitterness of captivity. He has no wife whose affectionate bosom would prove a pillow to his throbbing head; no child to lisp his name; no parent to wipe the tear half-suppressed from his swollen eyes. The scourge is the recompense of his toil; and the blood streaming down his sides ploughed by the hand of violence, is the wages of his hard bondage. Hope, that lightens anguish, that sweetens care, that heals the wounds of the heart, the only remaining consolation of the miserable, and that assists even the prisoner to carry his fetters—Hope has stretched her wings and fled from the fields nourished by human blood, the blood of Africa's enslaved sons. He



casts many a gloomy look to the close of that life, which is to him trouble and anguish. He has not even the consolation of reflecting that he shall lay his head upon the turf that hides his ancestors, and repose by the side of his parents: an idea precious to nature in her wildest, darkest, most uncultivated state; and which civilized nations have never consented to relinquish. He winds up all his mental powers against the weakness of complaint; he sheds no tears but in secret; and despair breaks his heart. Nature has taught him that in the grave “the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest”—and he anticipates death as the only friend which oppression has left him. And who are his tyrants? The descendants of Shem and of Japheth,—polished Europe. By what principles of justice is Europe the scourge of Africa? By what right is the liberty of that man infringed and destroyed? We claim a right to the air which we breathe; and to the general, unrestricted bounties of nature; and he has with us this common right. Britain concentrates all her forces, and awakens her energies along all her shores—her sons are willing to die for the cause of freedom; and this queen of the nations has set a noble example to every other empire, in breaking her yoke from the neck of Africa. Ah, let it not be said, he has no feel-



ing—Look upon his countenance, is it not furrowed by tears springing from a sense of sorrow and of injury? His heart once beat with parental transport. The hut was precious to him which sheltered his children. He wept with his family when they wept, and rejoiced when they rejoiced. What is there in the Continent scorched by the sun's vertical rays that should so essentially alter Man? Pierce that arm—you will find blood circulating through it's veins and arteries, like your own. His limbs are as pliant, and his heart as warm. Do not call him a barbarian. Deprived of all his rights, with all his consolations destroyed before his eyes, are we to wonder that mere nature should be sullen and revengeful? Are not those the Savages who would not have pity, when they saw the tears of their brother? and who have reduced him to the situation, which excites his fury, and fires his malice? But Europe has another title—She is Christian Europe; and from what part of the mild and just precepts of the Redeemer, can she draw a sanction for oppression? Well may the wretched slave say—

Is there, as you sometimes tell us,

Is there One who reigns on high?

Did he bid you buy and sell us,

Speaking from his throne the sky?



Ask him, if your knotted scourges,  
Matches, blood-extorting screws,  
Are the means which duty urges  
Agents of his will to use?

Hark ! he answers—Wild tornadoes,  
Strewing yonder sea with wrecks,  
Wasting towns, plantations, meadows,  
Are the voice with which he speaks !

He foreseeing what vexations  
Afric's sons would undergo,  
Fix'd their Tyrants' habitations,  
Where his whirlwinds answer---No !

I shall be pardoned for having dwelt so long upon a subject so interesting: and leaving the further discussion of Noah's predictions, which precede the subject of this evening, I shall lead you immediately to our present object,

#### THE PROPHECY CONCERNING THE ARAKS.

It is comprehended in the language of the angel to Hagar, previous to the birth of Ishmael, the ancestor of the principal part of the Arabs; and before we review it, it is only necessary to observe, that whatever is predicted of good or evil respecting any particular person, is generally intended of his posterity. “ And the  
“ angel of the Lord said unto her, Behold, thou  
“ art with child, and shalt bear a son, and



“ shalt call his name Ishmael \*; because the  
 “ Lord hath heard thy afflictions. And he will  
 “ be a wild man; his hand will be against  
 “ every man, and every man’s hand will be  
 “ against him; and he shall dwell in the  
 “ presence of all his brethren.” There is yet  
 one other passage which will supply a few ad-  
 ditional circumstances to this prediction. It is  
 the answer of God to the prayer of Abraham,  
 “ O that Ishmael might live before thee!” It  
 is distinctly asserted that the patriarch should  
 assuredly have a son by Sarah, whose name  
 should be Isaac; and that with him and with  
 his posterity the grand and peculiar covenant  
 should be established: but it is added—“ As  
 “ for Ishmael I have heard thee; behold, I have  
 “ blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and  
 “ will multiply him exceedingly: twelve princes  
 “ shall he beget, and I will make him a great  
 “ nation †.” In these combined predictions  
 one great and leading circumstance is clearly  
 foretold,

#### HIS WILD INDEPENDENCE:

Every thing else is collateral and subordinate.  
 Our leading object therefore should be, to ex-  
 hibit how far this great character has been, and

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\* *God shall hear.*

† Gen. xvii. 18—20.



is, maintained among the Arabs, his descendants, in past ages, and at the present moment. We shall attempt,

I. A general review of the language employed in the prediction.

The first prediction respects his MULTITUDE. “I will multiply him exceedingly.”—“I will make him a great nation.” This declaration was singularly fulfilled in the rapid increase of Ishmael’s immediate descendants. Isaac, the child of promise, with whom God connected the covenant of redemption, and in whom the merciful designs of God towards guilty man centred, had only two sons—Jacob and Esau. The last of these was rejected; and the line in which the Messiah was to appear confined itself to the younger. One hundred and sixty-nine years after the period of the delivery of this prophecy, the sons of Jacob amounted to *twelve*; while the children of Ishmael were so considerably increased as to form a trading nation. At the moment when the eleven patriarchs were plotting the destruction of their brother Joseph, “behold a company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead, with their camels bearing spicery, and balm, and myrrh, going to carry it down into Egypt.”

The second thing specified is that he should



beget “TWELVE PRINCES.” Accordingly we find, that when Moses enumerates the immediate descendants of Ishmael by name, he concludes his account with these words: “These  
 “are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their  
 “names, by their towns, and by their castles;  
 “*twelve princes*, according to their nations.” The historians who have written on the customs of the Arabs, inform us that the posterity of Ishmael is still divided into tribes, at the head of every one of which is a ruler, called a Phylarch: and such, no doubt, were the “princes” of Moses.

The third point in the prophecy is his CHARACTER: “he will be a wild man.” The original reads literally “a wild-ass man:” for the very word \* applied to Ishmael in this prophecy is applied to that animal in other parts of the Scriptures. The image is extremely beautiful. The principal qualities of the wild ass are, savage independence, prodigious swiftness, a disposition to form themselves into troops, and an habitation in the wilderness. All these strongly characterize the Arabs. The description of the wild ass in the book of Job, will be

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\* פֶּרֶא. See Taylor's Heb. Concord. Also Bp. Newton on the Prophecies, vol. i. p. 23. Bochart translates it, “as wild as a wild ass”—*tam ferus quam amager*.



present to the recollection of every one who has read, and learned to admire, the Bible. “Who hath sent out the wild ass free? or who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass? Whose house I have made the wilderness, and the barren lands his dwelling. He scorneth the multitude of the city, neither regardeth he the crying of the driver. The range of the mountains is his pasture, and he searcheth after every green thing \*.” With respect to himself, the dawn of prophetic veracity began to appear from his very birth, and more especially as he ripened into manhood. His mother was driven into a desert by the desire of her mistress: there he had received his early impressions, and there “he grew.” He was a stranger to his father’s house; and was early inured to hardships. His mind acquired fierceness from solitude, as his body grew robust. In respect to his posterity it is equally just. The same ferocious independence stamps their character. They have no settled rest. The tent which covers them during the shadow of night, is struck in the morning; and they occupy the range of the desert. Civilization has never imprinted her foot upon their barren sand; and Time himself has failed to alter the shades of

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\* Job xxxix. 5—8.



their general outline. Ishmael was an archer; and bows and arrows are their proper instruments of war, in the use of which they have ever been distinguished for dexterity and execution.

When it said, "his hand shall be against every man, and every man's hand against him"—the prediction concerns more immediately his descendants. But in respect of individuals, or nations, if the first member of the sentence be true, the last is inevitable. Society is held together by mutual obligations. Man is drawn to man by a conviction of the advantages of co-operation. All unions have their proper and respective duties, obligations, and responsibilities. We are able to lighten each others burdens by mutual assistance; and aid commands affection. By his attention to me, by his care over me, by his anxious concern for me, I distinguish my parent, my brother, my friend, my neighbour. Dissolve these bonds, and society is destroyed. Renounce the connections which nature or social order have formed, and you are necessarily renounced in return. He who feels not, and who cares not, for another, stands isolated in the very centre of society, is a hermit in the midst of the crowded city, and deserves to be considered as a barbarian, although encircled by all the advantages of civilization. It is human na-



ture, it is the ordination of God; he whose "hand is against every man's," shall have "every man's hand against him." As this is the leading feature of the prophecy; let us see how it corresponds with the Arabs,

## II. In the former periods of their history.

It would be easy to produce the names and authority of a long list of historians, whose descriptions of the manners and of the circumstances of the Arabs in successive ages, abundantly confirm the features of this prediction, while they had no such intentions. We might also appeal to heathen writers, who had never read, nor probably ever heard this prophecy even by tradition, yet whose narratives represent them in past periods what they are to this hour, fiercely independent. But without multiplying testimonies of this description, we shall present you with facts respecting them as they arose, gathered from the united evidence of different writers, who, however they may be at variance on other points, are agreed on this subject. They have resisted successfully in every age the armies that have invaded them; and their necks have not been galled by the yoke of submission. When Diodorus Siculus describes the glory of Sesostris, the most renowned monarch that ever swayed the sceptre of



Egypt, and the extent of his conquests, he is compelled to make a concession favourable to our subject, and to acknowledge that the Arabs were formidable even to him. So far from crouching before his arms, which when directed to every other quarter had been deemed irresistible, the man who had, in the pride of his power, yoked kings to his chariot literally as beasts of burden whenever he entered the city or the temple \*, was compelled to build a wall along the coast of Egypt from Heliopolis to Pelusium, to guard himself against his impetuous neighbours the Arabs and the Syrians †. The Assyrians, the Medes, and the Persians found them alike invincible. They were generally on friendly terms with them: but were frequently obliged to obtain by courtesy that which they could not have hoped from force. Cambyzes, when he turned his arms against Egypt, was first compelled to ask permission of the Arabs to pass through their dominions: and Cyrus, the glorious deliverer of the Jews, the hero who

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\* Diod. Sic. lib. i. p. 53. Laurentii Rhodmani, edit. 1604. See note 2, at the end of the Lecture.

† Ετείχισε δὲ καὶ τὴν πρὸς ἀνατολὰς νεύσαν πλευρὰν τῆς Αἰγύπτου πρὸς τὰς ἀπὸ τῆς Συρίας καὶ, τῆς Ἀραβίας ἐμβολὰς, ἀπὸ Πηγασίας μέχρις Ἡλιωπόλεως, διὰ τῆς ἐρήμου, τὸ μῆκος ἐπὶ σαθῆς χιλίας καὶ πεντακοσίας.

Diod. Sic. lib. i. p. 52.



subdued Babylon, could never impose conditions upon this free and independent people\*. Alexander, whom men have consented to call the Great, and whose ambition was so insatiable, that when he had subdued the known globe, he is said to have wept that he had not other worlds to conquer—never stretched his powerful sceptre over these wandering tribes of the desert. When other nations sent embassies of submission, and the highest ambition of the barbarous and of the civilized, was alike to sit under the shadow of his protection, the descendants of Ishmael disdained to court his favour, or to conciliate his affection. They rejected his friendship, and despised his menaces. He was mortified at their indifference, and determined to chastise their presumption. He raised a prodigious force by sea and by land; and made such preparations as upon all human calculation might defy calamity. The veracity of prophecy, and the existence of this people on the one side, seemed to be balanced over against the renown and the power of Alexander. Another hand interposed—and an invincible arm arrested the enraged conqueror. In the very midst of his purposes, Alexander was cut off, and the Arabs delivered: for he died in the

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\* Herod. lib. iii. Diod. Sic. lib. ii. p. 131. See note 3, at the end.



flower of his age, and before his plan of operation could be put into practice. After this snare was broken, nothing was attempted against their liberties, till Antigonus waged unsuccessful war with them. After several attacks he left them in their original state of wild freedom ; and was so far from having subjected them in any degree, that they chased his soldiers from their dominions, and would not allow them to gather bitumen from the lake Asphaltites. In the changes affected by time, the sceptre of the world passed into the hands of Rome :—but while she imposed fetters upon all other nations, the Arabs remained free. Efforts were made by several illustrious generals, at different periods of the Roman power, to reduce this stubborn track of country to a Roman province : but they all failed. Partial success attended the exertions of Pompey in the time of the Republic, and of Ælius Gallus in the reign of Augustus ; a few tribes were subdued, and an inconsiderable impression made upon the country : but neither was their conquest complete, nor their assault general, nor the track which was occupied by their arms extensive, nor their influence permanent. The same may be said of the succeeding attacks of the emperors Trajan and Severus : flattery ascribed much more of prosperity to their arms than truth will allow : and a most respectable and



accurate work of history \*, after the closest and most extensive researches, says of Trajan, to whom the greatest measure success has been allowed, “that he never was master of “ Arabia Petræa, much less of Arabia Felix, “ notwithstanding the mean adulation of his “ coins, orators, and historians.” The naked fact is this—the Roman eagle which spread her resistless pinions over all countries, and which neither the storms of the north could terrify, nor the supposed barriers of the world confine, found no rest for the sole of her foot on the barren sands of Arabia, and returned unsuccessful from the pursuit of the rough sons of Ishmael. The fall of Rome conducts us to a period which we may call comparatively modern; and we have few accounts relating to this singular people, of moment, till we find the balance of power, in that quarter of the world, in the hands of the Turks. Let your attention be now directed to,

III. The fulfilment of this prediction in the present situation of the Arabs.

So far from acknowledging the power of the Turks, this people are themselves compelled to pay a stipulated sum, a sort of annual tribute, to these fierce wanderers, as a security to the pilgrims who cross their wilderness to Mecca,

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\* Anc. Univ. Hist. vol. xviii. b. iv. p. 300. Dublin edit. 1746.



whom after all they frequently plunder, and violate their treaty with impunity.

Their habits of life, for the most part continue what they were from the beginning. They still dwell in tents—still live upon the milk and the flesh of their camels, still are gathered into tribes, still roam over the desert, shifting their habitations as necessity, or pleasure, or convenience may dictate. There have been many attempts to account for the independence and the habits of the Arabs from their situation: but this can never be deemed an objection to the fulfilment of the prediction. How is it that they have never altered their situation, and never changed their habits? Other nations have not continued what they were from the first. They have commenced in the savageness of uncultivated nature, and have gradually emerged into the polish of civilization. They have become changed till not a trace of their forefathers remained among them. Excess of refinement has melted into weakness, and superinduced their ruin. They have perished; and other empires have risen from their ashes. Thus was it with Rome herself—and such has been the general track of time. But he who reads the description upon which this lecture is founded, is reading the life of Ishmael, is reading the history of his immediate descendants, is reading



the record of the Arabs in all ages, is reading the representation of what they are to this day, to this hour. At the close of thirty-seven centuries, they are unchanged in their habits, in their character, in their independence, and in their habitation.

That their character is unchanged, and that it continues to correspond with the description given of their ancestor, "his hand shall be against every man, and every man's hand against him," is the testimony of every modern writer, whose lot it has been to traverse these wide and barren wilds. Travellers are compelled to cross the desert in large and strong companies, called caravans, and even then scarcely ever escape being plundered. An Arab esteems plunder as his right, and considers depredation as his occupation. He never thinks of saying, "I robbed"—but "I gained." He is even said to justify his conduct on the ground of Sarah's cruelty to the mother of Ishmael, whose descendant he well knows he is; and thus age after age, supports the patrimony transmitted to him, satisfied with the lot of his father. Yet are they faithful to each other; and the property which they have among themselves is sacred\*. In order to pass unmolested

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\* Sale's Prelim. Disc. to the Koran, vol. i. p. 40. Univ. Hist. vol. xviii. book iv. p. 258, 259. Newton on the Proph. vol. i. p. 24.



through the desert, modern travellers have found that it is necessary to obtain as a guide, one of the Arabs of that, which then happens to be the ruling tribe; and in his protection is security both for property and for life.

I have already adverted to their continued independence; and it is supported by most respectable authority. A writer in high repute, and whose testimony almost every treatise on prophecy, and every modern history of the Arabs, has copied, says, “The Kings of Yaman, “ as well as the princes of Mecca and Medina, “ are absolutely independent, and not at all “ subject to the Turk, as some late authors have “ imagined. These princes often making cruel “ wars among themselves, gave an opportunity “ to Selim I. and his son Soliman, to make “ themselves masters of the coasts of Arabia “ on the Red Sea, and of part of Yaman, by “ means of a fleet built at Sues: but their successors have not been able to maintain their “ conquests; for except the port of Jodda, “ where they have a Basha whose authority is “ very small, they possess nothing considerable “ in Arabia \*.” It is pleasant to trace the ac-

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\* Sale's Prelim. Disc. to the Koran, vol. i. p. 87. In addition to the writers of the Anc. Univ. Hist. and Newton on the Prophecies, and the writer quoted above, the present state of the Arabs may be accurately gathered from the travels of Shaw, of Pococke, of Bruce, and a variety of others.



complishment of prophecy, relative to the continued independence and disposition of this people, in the accounts transmitted to us through the medium of the public journals of the day, respecting the support of the little English army lately in Egypt; who, cut off for a time from the resources of their country, received their supplies from the Bedoween Arabs, by whom they were succoured in defiance of the enmity, or the power, of either the French or the Turks; and, perhaps, whose principal reason for assisting us at that moment was, that in that quarter, our hand, like their own, was against every man's, and every man's hand against us.

The voice of ancient and of modern history is, therefore on the side of that prediction, which we have read you this night respecting Ishmael, and which has been verified in every successive age, from his days to this hour, in his descendants. This accumulation of evidence, however, has not deterred an historian\* of no uncommon rank and reputation, from attempting to bring the alledged accomplishment of their prophecy into discredit. It is to be lamented, especially for the rising generation, that infidelity should roll her dark tide along

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\* Gibbon—in his History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.



the largest and most respectable channels of information, opened to them either in history or in general literature. It is an increase of the evil, when the poison is mingled with whatever can render the potion palatable and pleasant : when doubts are urged with apparent diffidence, and are stated with apparent candour : when the conclusion is concealed till the reader becomes fascinated by the steps which lead to it ; and when scepticism is recommended by whatever can dazzle the judgment, charm the imagination, and please the ear, in eloquence, in taste, and in composition. The insinuating suspicion awakened by an historian, often produces more than the open attack of avowed scepticism. He has it in his power to touch some subjects so lightly and to colour others so deeply : to pass over almost unnoticed a strong circumstance that makes against his system, and to press into an imposing point of view every event, trifling in itself, which can appear, or be made to appear, to sanction it, that the mind is seduced, not so much by a single remark, as by the general direction of the narrative. In thus noticing the writer in question, I feel that I am censuring one of the first works ever produced, by human industry and human skill ; a work that stands unrivalled in beauty and in information on the point of history, which it embraces :



a work that has secured immortality for its author as an historian, so long as the English language can be read, and the fate of falling Rome excite pity. Yet this production so important, so interesting, so well-executed, possesses all the unamiable qualities which a friend to revealed truth must deplore, and which render it an extremely daring risque to put it into the hand of any person whose mind is not well-established, and whose judgment is not sufficiently matured to distinguish sophistry from argument, to repel insinuations that are not established by evidence, and to reject assertion when it is directed against the sanctity of truth. It is the characteristic of this work that under a professed candour, it reduces Christianity and all pretensions to revelation to one and the same standard: that the New Testament and the Koran, are placed in the same light, and spoken of in much the same terms: and that both are so represented as to appear equally questionable. Yet from lips so unwilling truth sometimes extorts a testimony; and occasionally at a moment when nothing was less intended. I trust these remarks will not be deemed unfounded, when I have produced only this solitary instance of his enmity to the evidences of scriptural veracity, in the case of the Arabs; and at the same time the concession which he is compelled to make



upon the truth of an historian, which is in itself a complete refutation of his own sentiments.

In the elegant History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire \* it is said—"The  
" perpetual independence of the Arabs has been  
" the theme of praise among strangers and natives ; and the arts of controversy transform  
" this singular event into a prophecy and a  
" miracle, in favour of the posterity of Ishmael.  
" Some exceptions, that can neither be dissembled nor eluded, render this mode of reasoning as indiscreet as it is superfluous : the  
" kingdom of Yeaman has been successively  
" subdued by the Abyssinians, the Persians, the  
" Sultans of Egypt, and the Turks : the holy  
" cities of Mecca and Medina have repeatedly  
" bowed under a Scythian tyrant ; and the  
" Roman province of Arabia embraced the peculiar wilderness in which Ishmael and his sons  
" must have pitched their tent in the face of  
" their brethren." What answer shall be given to this testimony, expressed in terms so unqualified, the force of which is levelled professedly against the prophecy in the first instance, and afterwards against the superintendence by which it is fulfilled? Shall I refer you once

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\* Vol. ix. p. 229, 230. Octavo edit. London, 1797.



more to Diodorus Siculus, as an evidence that they were unconquered in ancient times? Or to the writers of the Ancient Universal History, and to the decided confirmation of the learned and accurate Sale, in his Preliminary Discourses to the Koran, whose language has been already quoted, to prove that as a body they remain unconquered, and that no considerable impression has been made, at any period, by any power, upon their country? No, I will only appeal to the authority of this same writer: who, with celerity and force which cannot but excite our astonishment, on the same page, without the intervention of a single sentence, destroys all his own objections, and refutes most ably his own system, when he adds, (words never to be forgotten,) “ Yet these exceptions are *temporary* or *local* ;  
“ the body of the nation has escaped the yoke  
“ of the most powerful monarchies ; the arms  
“ of Sesostris and Cyrus, of Pompey and Tra-  
“ jan, could never atchieve the conquest of  
“ Arabia ; the present sovereign of the Turks  
“ may exercise a shadow of jurisdiction, but  
“ his pride is reduced to solicit the friendship  
“ of a people, *whom it is dangerous to provoke,*  
“ *and fruitless to attack* \*.” He goes on to de-  
velope the natural causes which produce and

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\* Mr. Kett in his publication on Prophecy has ably exhibited this inconsistency of Gibbon. Kett on Prophecy, vol. 1. p. 63—68.



secure the independence of the Arabs : but it is with the fact alone that we have to do ; and the fact that they are free, and have been ever so, is all that we require to establish the prophecy. In a note on the page in question, this writer farther acknowledges, that “ the real “ possessions, and some naval inroads of Trajan, “ are *magnified* by history and medals into the “ Roman conquest of Arabia.” No additional observation from any quarter can be necessary to meet his objections, for if the last assertions quoted are true, (and they are supported by all history, ancient and modern) the first are nugatory ; and thus the character of Ishmael stands unobliterated on the features of his descendants, “ He will be a wild man ; his hand will be “ against every man, and every man’s hand “ against him ; and he shall dwell in the pre- “ sence of all his brethren.” It was impossible for any eye to have pierced the clouds of unveiled time ; or for any uninspired tongue to have foretold the future destinies of this outcast child, and of his unborn descendants. But he, who collects into one point of view the past, the present, and the future, as scattered rays of light are sometimes combined in a common centre, uttered this clear and explicit prediction. Nor can it ever be affirmed that this was the language of ignorance presuming to anticipate



the secrets of future years—it was the unchangeable decree of him, whose power has since accomplished that, which his sovereign will had predetermined, and which his oracles have expressly foretold. This is one of the cases in which we can appeal to existing circumstances, and call in the testimony of present evidences. The prophecy which has been continually fulfilling, is yet in complete force; and the veracity of it is still guarded, the accomplishment of it is still witnessed, by him, “who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working.” And we shall see greater things than these. Already we have seen the thrones of this world shake to their foundation: and yet has God revealed his designs but in part. Providence is preaching loud; and the heart of man has long failed him in expectation of “the things that are coming to pass.” So much the more earnestly does it become us to cleave to a system which alone can be to us an overshadowing rock, when all the pavilions of worldly consolation are swept away by the whirlwind of calamity.



## NOTES.

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### NOTES TO THE THIRD LECTURE.

#### NOTE I.

RESPECTING the substitution of *Canaan* for *Ham* in the prophetic malediction of Noah, various opinions have been held by different Critics. The Writers of the Ancient Universal History say, "This curse, if it be a curse, being pronounced not against Ham the immediate transgressor—hath occasioned various conjectures." They seem to lean to the opinion of Mr. Bayle, who "does not take this passage properly to contain a curse; and says, 'it is pretty 'strange, that the Scriptures take no notice of any thing being 'done by Noah to Ham'—he observes, that there is not one word of censure passed upon Ham; that the patriarch was content to curse Canaan the son of Ham; and that this curse was nothing else but a prophecy of the victories, which the descendants of Shem should obtain over the descendants of Canaan under Joshua, that is to say, seven or eight ages after the crime of Ham had been committed. (Bayle Dict. Hist. Art. Cham.)" They add, "Some have believed that Noah cursed Canaan, because he could not well have cursed Ham himself, whom God had not long before blessed." "Others, more reasonably," to encourage the Israelites. They conclude that not "all Ham's race were here accursed," but that "the malediction was confined to Canaan and his posterity."

*Anc. Univ. Hist. vol. i. p. 352, et seq. Dublin edit. of 1745.*

Bishop Newton thus proposes to alter the text. "Hitherto we have explained the prophecy according to the present copies of our Bible: but if we were to correct the text, as we should any ancient classic author in a like case, the whole perhaps might be made easier and plainer. 'Ham the father of Canaan' is mentioned in the preceding part of the story; and how then came the person of



“ a sudden to be changed into *Canaan* ? The Arabic version in these  
 “ verses hath *the father of Canaan*, instead of *Canaan*. Some copies  
 “ of the Septuagint likewise have *Ham* instead of *Canaan*, as if Ca-  
 “ naan was a corruption of the text. Vatablus and others by *Ca-*  
 “ *naan* understand *the father of Canaan*, which was expressed twice  
 “ before. And if we regard the metre, this line ‘ *Cursed be Canaan,*  
 “ is much shorter than the rest, as if something was deficient. May  
 “ we not suppose therefore (without taking such liberties as Father  
 “ Houbigant hath with the Hebrew text) that the Copyist by mistake  
 “ wrote only *Canaan*, instead of *Ham the father of Canaan* ?”

*Newton on Prophecy, vol. i. Disser. i. p. 11 and 12.*

Among the invaluable labours of the Editor of Calmet, are to be found some interesting particulars relative to Ham, both in the volume of Fragments, and in the more recent publication of Scripture Illustrated. In the last of these works, he says, “ As to the true reading  
 “ of the passage, the name *Caanan* is not read in the Aldine edition  
 “ of lxx. and in seven MSS. collated by Dr. Holmes, but *Ham* is  
 “ made the subject of this curse. The Arabic version reads both  
 “ names, ‘ *Ham, the father of Canaan;*’ the Greek of Venice places  
 “ the curse of *Canaan* separately. After all, I must own, I think  
 “ the words ‘ *the father of Canaan,*’ in the Arabic version, have  
 “ very much the air of a note, received into the text by way of ex-  
 “ planation. Add to which, the testimony of the Indian records, at-  
 “ tribute the guilt, and direct the punishment, to *Ham* only.”

*Scripture Illustrated, p. 23, on Gen. ix. ver. 20.*

In his volume of Fragments, he has given the Indian Story of Ham, as translated by Sir W. Jones.

*ASIATIC RESEARCHES, vol. iii. p. 263.*

“ 1. To Satyavarman, that sovereign of the *whole* earth, were born  
 “ three sons: the eldest Sharma; then C’harma; and *thirdly*,  
 “ Jya’peti by name.

“ 2. *They were* all men of good morals, excellent in virtue and *vir-*  
 “ *tuous* deeds; skilled in the use of weapons, to strike with, or to be  
 “ thrown; brave men, eager for victory in battle.

“ 3. But Satyavarman being continually delighted with devout me-  
 “ ditation, and seeing his sons fit for dominion, laid upon them the  
 “ burden of government;

“ 4. *While* he remained honouring and satisfying the gods, and



“ priests, and kine. One day by the act of destiny, the king having  
 “ drunk mead,

“ 5. Became senseless, *and* lay asleep naked : then was he seen  
 “ by C’harma, and by him were his two brothers called.

“ 6. *To whom he said*, What has now befallen ? In what state is  
 “ this our Sire ?

“ By those two was he hidden with clothes, and called to his  
 “ senses again and again.

“ 7. Having recovered his intellect, and perfectly knowing what  
 “ had passed,

“ HE CURSED C’HARMA, *saying*,

“ THOU SHALT BE THE SERVANT OF SERVANTS.

“ 8. *And*, since thou wast a laughter in their presence, from  
 “ laughter shalt thou acquire a name.

“ Then he gave to Sharma, the wide domain on the south of the  
 “ Snowy Mountains,

“ 9. And to Jya’peti, he gave all on the north of the snowy moun-  
 “ tains ; but he (Satyavarman) by the power of religious contempla-  
 “ tion, attained supreme bliss.”

*Fragments to Calmet. Frag. xix. p. 36, 37.*

Lieutenant Wilford renders this passage of Indian history—“ it  
 “ was in consequence of his father’s imprecation, that he became a  
 “ slave to the slaves of his brothers.”

*The same, p. 37. from Asiatic Res. vol. iii. p. 67.*

Dr. Geddes differs altogether from Bp. Newton and from the  
 Editor of Calmet. He speaks of the argument deduced from the  
 metre, under the contemptuous title of “ the chimerical rules of  
 “ Hebrew metre”—and uniting it with that drawn from the reading  
 of the Arabic Version, adds, “ neither of these authorities is suf-  
 “ ficient to justify an alteration in the present text ; in which there  
 “ is no variety of lection either in the Sam. or Hebr. copies : and with  
 “ which all the other ancient versions perfectly agree.” He hazards  
 a conjecture respecting the circumstance of the copies, named by Bp.  
 Newton and others, reading Ham instead of Canaan, as it stands in  
 our Bibles. “ I have sometimes imagined that the reading  $\chi\alpha\mu$ , in  
 “ the Aldine and other copies, may have arisen from the abbrevia-  
 “ tion of  $\chi\alpha\nu\alpha\nu$  ; thus  $\chi\tilde{\alpha}\nu$ . The  $\mu$  and  $\nu$ , in many Greek MSS.,  
 “ are to be distinguished only by the length of the left leg, which in



“  $\mu$  is much shorter than in  $\nu$ , so that this latter actually more resembles our common  $\mu$  than it does the  $\nu$  itself of those days; and this mode of orthography is preserved throughout the Greek New Testament of the edition of Alcalá.” Upon the whole he concludes, “ that to express his indignation at so infamous conduct, he curses Ham in his progeny, and in *him* of his progeny who was, probably most dear to him, as being his youngest son,” &c.

*Dr. Geddes' Crit. Rem. in Gen. ix. p. 76, 77.*

This differs essentially from those impressions which I entertain, and which I have in the preceding Lecture endeavoured to inculcate, respecting the spirit under which prophetic annunciations of good or evil were made—for the “ prophecy came not in old time by the will of man,” by his partialities or by his prejudices.

The learned Mr. Bryant retains the reading of *Canaan*, as in our Bible, and argues well as to the object and purport of the prophecy. How far his conjecture is founded in reason, respecting an omission in the prophecy, you will judge for yourselves. It is manifestly *only* conjecture: but it is conjecture marked with that reverence for the sacred Writings in which Dr. Geddes is so notoriously deficient.

Mr. Bryant says—“ It is mentioned that Ham, the son of Noah, had been guilty of a great breach of duty, and want of reverence to his father: that when Noah awoke, and was sensible of what his younger son had done, ‘ He said, cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be to his brethren. And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.’ It has seemed to many persons extraordinary, that, as Ham was the person guilty, he should be passed over without any animadversion; and that the curse should devolve to Canaan, who does not seem to have been at all an accomplice. But it must be observed, that these words are not so much to be esteemed a curse vented out of resentment against Ham and Canaan, for what had been done, as a prophetic denunciation of disobedience in time to come, and of the evils in consequence of it: and even then not uttered for their sakes, but upon account of others of another family, who were to come after, and to be instructed by it. It is very common with the sacred historian in the early accounts, which he gives us, to specify, what immediately relates to the grand purpose in hand; and to omit every thing else, which is not connected with it.



“ Many things alluded to were well known at the time he wrote: it  
“ was therefore sufficient to extract what was essential: and to  
“ give a sample for the whole. This may be observed in the ‘His-  
“ ‘tory of Lamech’, of a ‘conquest made by Jacob,’ in the ‘Frag-  
“ ‘ment upon the Conquest of Heshbon;’ and in other places. In  
“ the passage, I am speaking of, there is reason to think, that a great  
“ deal preceded what is here mentioned by Moses; and that we have  
“ only a part of the original prophecy. From the tenor of what re-  
“ mains, we may perhaps form some judgment of what is omitted.  
“ It is probable, that at this season the patriarch disclosed, what was  
“ to happen in after times, especially to the son, who had aggrieved  
“ him. There is, I think, an apparent chasm and failure; which  
“ may with great probability be filled up, from what seems to be im-  
“ plied in this curse upon Canaan. It is very reasonable to suppose,  
“ that Noah told Ham of the future apostacy of his children: that  
“ the same want of reverence, which Ham had exhibited, would be  
“ visible in his posterity: That the second in descent from him should  
“ be the first ‘rebel upon earth; and at the same time the first  
“ tyrant, who should usurp authority over his brethren:’ That of the  
“ race of Cush should be a daring confederacy, who at the general  
“ dispersion should withstand the divine dispensation, and arrogate  
“ to themselves territories in direct opposition to the will of God:  
“ That a chosen people were to arise; and that there was for them  
“ a particular land ordained: but that Canaan and his sons, another  
“ branch of his family, should disregard the ordinance, and seize upon  
“ the land, which was destined for God’s own portion. Then comes  
“ in the part to the purpose; ‘Cursed be Canaan; a servant of  
“ ‘servants shall he be unto his brethren: and Blessed be the Lord  
“ ‘God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.’ Of this nature  
“ I take to have been the original prophecy: and good reason may  
“ be given, why one part is omitted; and the other retained. The  
“ former part is omitted by the divine writer, as unnecessary to be re-  
“ lated; being either mentioned or implied in the common course of  
“ history. On the other hand, the propriety of inserting, what is spe-  
“ cified, is apparent. It was a prophecy, that related most inti-  
“ mately to the Israelites; who, when this history was promulged,  
“ were upon their journey to Canaan, the land adjudged to them for  
“ an inheritance, but occupied by others. It was to inform them



“ first, that the Canaanites had no right to the land, which they possessed: that they had been guilty of an undue usurpation: and were under the curse of God for their determined and obstinate disobedience: therefore for that reason they could not prosper against the Israelites. That the Israelites were going to their hereditary demesnes: to a land originally designed for them by the Great Disposer of thrones and kingdoms: that the blessing, entailed upon the sons of Shem, particularly belonging to the children of Jacob; in whom the prophecy was to be completed, and to whom the Canaanite was to be subservient. The time, the place, every circumstance shews with what propriety this part of the prophecy is retained: and at the same time it is evident, that something had preceded, which is omitted by Moses, as unnecessary to be related.”

*Bryant's Anc. Mythol. 4to edit. of 1807, vol. vi. p. 289—292, of Additional Remarks.*

I have quoted this passage so much at length, because while it throws some light on the intention of the prophecy, it goes far to justify, also, the subsequent invasion of the Canaanites by the Israelites—discussed in the Lectures on Scripture Facts.

Note 2. Testimony of Diod. Sic. to the pride of Sesostris: *ὁπότε δὲ πρὸς ἱερὸν ἢ πόλιν προσιέναι μέλλοι, τὰς ἵππους ἀπὸ τῶν τεθρίππων ὑπεξεύγνυνεν ἀντὶ τῶν κατὰ τέτλαρας τῶν τε βασιλεῖς καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἡγεμόνων, &c.*

*Diod. Sic. lib. i. p. 53, fol. Rhodmani edit. 1604.*

Note 3. Herodotus says, that the Arabians were never reduced to servitude by the Persians, but were treated as friends; and their assistance was courted when Cambysus wished to attack Egypt; for he could not effect his purpose without their permission. *Αραβιοὶ δὲ ὕδαμα κατήκυσαν ἐπὶ θαλάσῳ Περσῶν, ἀλλὰ ξεῖνοι ἐγενόητο, παρέντες Καμβύσεα ἐπὶ Αἰγύπτον· ἀκούων γὰρ Αραβίων, ὅτι ἐὰν ἐσβαλλοῖεν Περσῶν εἰς Αἰγύπτον.* *Herod. lib. iii. p. 198. Edit. Gale.*—That they were unconquered by the successive masters of mankind is testified by Diodorus Siculus, when he says, *ἔθ' οἱ Ἀσσύριοι τὸ παλαιόν, ἔθ' οἱ Μήδων καὶ Περσῶν ἔτι δὲ Μακεδόνων βασιλεῖς ἡδυνήθησαν αὐτὰς*



καταδελώσασθαι, πολλὰς μὲν, καὶ μεγάλας δυνάμεις ἐπ' αὐτὰς ἀγα-  
γόντες, ἑδέποτε δὲ τὰς ἐπιβολὰς συντελέσαντες.

*Diod. Sic. lib. ii. p. 131. Rhodom. edit. 1604.*

The excessive length of the note respecting Canaan, prevents me from quoting further from this historian: but that section of his second book relative to the inhabitants of Arabia, under the title *Ναβαταίους, Nabatæi*, would amply repay any one who should consult the whole of it; as a most striking representation of the state of the ancient Arabs corresponding in every particular, and more especially in their independance, with the same people of the present time.



## LECTURE IV.

## THE PROPHECIES OF DYING JACOB.

## GEN. XLIX.

*And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days. Gather yourselves together, and hear, ye sons of Jacob; and hearken unto Israel your father. Reuben, thou art my first-born, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power; unstable as water, thou shalt not excel; because thou wentest up to thy father's bed; then defiledst thou it; he went up to my couch. Simeon and Levi are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations. O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united: for in their anger they slew a man, and in their self-will they digged down a wall. Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel; I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel. Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy fathers' children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp:*



*from the prey, my son, thou art gone up : he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion ; who shall rouse him up ? The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come ; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his asses' colt unto the choice vine ; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes : His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk. Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea ; and he shall be for an haven of ships ; and his border shall be unto Zidon. Issachar is a strong ass couching down between two burdens : And he saw that rest was good, and the land that it was pleasant ; and bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant unto tribute. Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward. I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord ! Gad, a troop shall overcome him ; but he shall overcome at the last. Out of Asher his bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal dainties. Naphtali is a hind let loose : he giveth goodly words. Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well ; whose branches run over the wall : The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him : But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob ; (from thence is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel :) Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee ; and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, bles-*



*sings of the breasts, and of the womb: The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of thy progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren. Benjamin shall raven as a wolf: in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil. All these are the twelve tribes of Israel: and this is it that their father spake unto them, and blessed them; every one according to his blessing he blessed them. And he charged them, and said unto them, I am to be gathered unto my people: bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, In the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamra, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite for a possession of a burying-place. There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife; and there I buried Leah! The purchase of the field and of the cave that is therein was from the children of Heth.*

*And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people.*

THE closing scenes of every man's life are awful and impressive. When we stand by the side of a dying bed, lessons which are feebly conceived, and wholly disregarded at another



time, are taught to perfection, and force their way to the heart in defiance of human levity. Here we see the man resigning the several perfections which once elated him with pride, and laying down his boasted excellencies. Here the strong man is deprived of his strength, and the rich man is stripped of his riches. This is the end of all flesh. The attainments of the scholar, and the wisdom of the wise, cease with the breath departing from the nostrils. The career of glory terminates in the vale of mortality: it's lustre is extinguished in the shadow of death: and the hero yields to a stronger arm than his own. Here the dreams of a youthful imagination are broken, and the delusive enchantments of life vanish. Here the great and the gay discover how worthless, and how inconsiderable is the sum total of earthly good; and a true estimate of the present transitory existence is given. "It is better to go into the house of mourning, than to go into the house of feasting:" because the one strengthens the deceptions of time, and the other dissolves them. Let your hearts be serious this night: for that most interesting and useful of all scenes is painted before you in solemn colours—the close of a great and useful life.

There is a mournful gratification in the melan-



choly duty of following our departed friends to their last earthly retreat—the grave. It is in obedience to the voice of nature issuing from their very sepulchres, to which also our own hearts are responsive, that we go and see where they have laid them. Fashion has suppressed these strong emotions, and countermanded at once the impulse of nature, the voice of religion, and the custom of thousands of successive generations. When Abraham was to be laid in the grave, the office devolved upon his two sons, Isaac and Ishmael. Rispah is found watching the bodies of her slaughtered children by day and by night, till her interposition ceased only because it became useless through the resistless and consuming hand of time. The sisters of Lazarus were not afraid of the grave of their brother. The mother of Jesus had as fine and as acute feelings as the high-born and the high-bred females, who from excess of affectation (for it is not sensibility) abandon their dwelling the moment death enters it: yet she was found at the foot of the cross, and did not shrink from the scene of trial, while there remained a single maternal duty to fulfil. The family of Jacob are also seen this night collected around his couch, listening to his words, and watching his countenance, till the scene is closed by death.

The voice of God calling away the spirit



from it's present habitation, sounds in the ears of one man as the death-warrant of all his hopes, all his pleasures, all his schemes, all his peace: to another it will be the pledge of deliverance, the shout of triumph, the seal of immortality. When it is said—"the hour is come"—one man shudders; horror and dismay thrill through all his soul; the blood curdles in his veins; he sickens with apprehension: another feels exultation quicken the palpitations of his heart; joy sparkles in his eyes; expectation sits upon his countenance; hope springs forward on the wings of triumphant anticipation. One man says, 'Behold I die!—Farewell my possessions and my honours! Farewell my children and my servants! Farewell my hopes and my schemes, my pleasures and my felicity! How terrible, O Death, is thy approach, and how dreadful are thy consequences! This world fades from my eyes, and how fearful are the features of eternity! I am leaving my Gods, and there is none to deliver! I see before me the bar of Jesus Christ; but who may abide the day of his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth? I have refused his friendship; and can I expect his smile? I have slighted his love; and can I receive his approbation? I have consented to live without him, and now he leaves me to die without



‘ him—O for a shelter from his indignation!—  
 Another looks with a calm and bright eye upon  
 the grave, and says, ‘ I must shortly put off  
 ‘ this tabernacle! Welcome death, welcome  
 ‘ glory! Farewell years of misery and of sin!  
 ‘ Farewell world of sorrow and of vanity! Fare-  
 ‘ well, for a season, my companions in tribula-  
 ‘ tion! I go to my Father and to your Father;  
 ‘ to my God and to your God. Hail, ye scenes  
 ‘ of approaching and unfading felicity. Hail,  
 ‘ death, the messenger of peace, the herald of  
 ‘ immortality—

“ Cease, fond nature, cease thy strife,

“ And let me languish into life!”

Thus differently do men think, and speak, and feel upon the same subject: but these different views of death must arise from opposite principles; and there doubtless exists a powerful reason why he is to one man “ the king of terrors,” and to another “ an angel of light.” It is in connection with the sufferings and the atonement of our blessed Lord alone, that death loses his sting. “ Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” Faith in



this sacrifice had the same influence in former times, as in the present day ; and if Abraham saw the day of Jesus Christ afar off and rejoiced, we are not to imagine that it was shrouded from the eye of Jacob. The tranquillity of this closing scene of the patriarch's life, is to be accounted for on the principles laid down by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, which we have just cited. I will no longer detain you from the great object to which I have introduced you ; but turn your attention upon the PROPHECIES which fell from the lips of JACOB in the solemn hour of his departure from this world. The lips of dying men usually are supposed to utter truth : the last moments are usually occupied in recommending the considerations which cleave most closely to the heart : and the breath escaping from the nostrils is seldom wasted on trivial or useless topics.

Ver. 1 and 2. “ *And Jacob called unto his sons*  
 “ *and said, Gather yourselves together that I*  
 “ *may tell you that which shall befall you in the*  
 “ *last days. Gather yourselves together, and*  
 “ *hear, ye sons of Jacob ; and hearken unto Israel*  
 “ *your father.*” It has been a prevailing opinion from the earliest ages that a power of foretelling future events was communicated in the hour of dissolution. The writings of the ancient classics are full of evidences relative to this point. HOMER has put a prediction into the



mouth of PATROCLUS \*, respecting the death of his adversary ; and in like manner HECTOR † on the brink of mortality unveils the fate of ACHILLES. SOCRATES supported this opinion, and produced it as an admitted truth upon a very solemn occasion, when he was tried for his own life ‡. XENOPHON puts the same sentiment into the mouth of CYRUS ; and doubtless he meant it to be considered as his own §. DIODORUS SICULUS represents it as the established sentiment of philosophy in his day ; and as the avowed opinion of illustrious men in the ages that preceded ||. It is pleasant to trace the progress of such an impression from it's source ; and to follow it through successive ages, and over different countries. Our own nation has fostered the opinion ; and SHAKSPEARE, who copied from nature, as well in life and manners, as in her operations, has in more instances than one espoused the prevailing idea. Richard the second and Henry the sixth predict at the close of their lives future wars ; and the language

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\* Hom. Iliad, Tom. ii. Lib. xvi. 851. p. 99. Foulis edit. Glasgæ.

† Hom. Iliad. Tom. ii. Lib. xxii. v. 355. p. 209.

‡ Plato. Dial. Apolog. Socrat. p. 115. edit. Oxonii 1752.

§ Xenoph. Cyropæd. Tom. iv. l. viii. p. 339. Hutch. edit. typ. Foulis, Glasg.—See also Note I. at the end.

|| Diod. Sic. lib. xviii. p. 586. Rhod. edit. 1604.



ascribed to Percy states the sentiment in all its force:

“ ————— O, I could prophecy,

“ But that the earthy and cold hand of death

“ Lies on my tongue —————. \*”

It is not our business to expose the fallacy of this opinion: nor is it wonderful that those who gathered the immortality of the soul from such evidences as reason alone could furnish, should imagine that a greater flood of light should pour in upon the spirit approaching the confines of superior illumination and glory. But my principal object in producing these instances is to render probable to you, a point on which I have no doubt myself, that the thought originally arose from revelation; and that the prophetic penetration ascribed to these celebrated personages—in fact, the sentiment altogether—originated in traditions respecting the power of reading futurity, conferred upon the patriarchs in their last moments, so far as their posterity were concerned, and whenever it became desirable to announce something to the world, relative to the coming of the Messiah, who, according to the flesh, was to spring from their loins.

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\* Chalmers' Shakspeare, vol. iv. p. 514. Henry IV. part I.



It may be proper to remark, previous to the discussion of the predictions relating to the sons of Jacob, that he adopted Ephraim and Manasseh, the sons of Joseph, as his own children; and that the predictions delivered respecting them, upon that occasion, were exactly fulfilled.

“ And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt, before I came unto thee into Egypt, are *mine*: as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine.” And the adoption of these children was distinct from his general regard to the other sons of Joseph, of whom he says—  
 “ thy issue which thou begettest *after* them, shall be *thine*, and shall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance\*.”

In thus adopting the children of Joseph as his own, and in permitting them to share both his present blessing, and the future, promised inheritance of Canaan, in common with his own sons, he transferred the double portion, which by right belonged to the first born, but which Reuben had forfeited by transgression, to his beloved Joseph. The predictions relating to these children were delivered with that perspicuity which forms the grand characteristic of Scripture Prophecy; and they embrace circum-

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\* Gen. xlviii. 5, 6.



stances singular as it respects the reversion of worldly maxims: for here, as in a variety of other instances in the arrangements of providence, the younger has the pre-eminence of the elder. It should seem, that by the almost uniform preference given to the younger, God designed to counteract the purposes, and to defeat the decisions of men, who always provided for the first-born; and to furnish memorable and perpetual evidences, that those vain distinctions in which mankind glory avail nothing before him, but rather that “things which are despised hath he chosen, that no flesh should glory in his presence.” “And when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him: and he held up his father’s hand, to remove it from Ephraim’s head to Manasseh’s head. And Joseph said unto his father, Not so, my father: for this is the first-born; put thy right hand upon his head. And his father refused, and said, I know it, my son, I know it; he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations. And he blessed them that day, saying, In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim, and as Manasseh: and he set Ephraim before Ma-



“ nasseh \*.” Both these tribes became proverbially prosperous: but Ephraim excelled both in number and in privileges. The tribe of Ephraim became the seat both of the Tabernacle and of the Kingdom: and a very easy comparison will exemplify their superiority over Manasseh in respect of increase. When Moses numbered the men of war in “ the wilderness “ of Sinai,” his estimate of the tribe of Ephraim “ from twenty years old and upward, all that “ were able to go forth to war,” returned him, “ forty thousand and five hundred :” upon the same calculation Manasseh furnished but thirty-two thousand two hundred †. When in his parting blessing this illustrious lawgiver pronounced the eulogy of these two tribes, as an evidence of their comparative strength, he speaks of “ the ten thousands of Ephraim,” and only of “ the thousands of Manasseh ‡.” So considerable did the tribe of Ephraim become, that his name was frequently, and especially in the prophecies, employed to express the *ten tribes* of Israel, as was that of Judah, to distinguish those which adhered to the house of David.

Perhaps it is almost needless to observe, that

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\* Gen. xlviii. 17—20.

† Numb. i. 32—35. Num. ii. 18—21.

‡ Deut. xxxiii. 17.



by the term, "*the last days*," is intended simply future times: and assuredly it is unnecessary to produce any instances from the Scriptures to prove that this is the common usage of the phrase. There is one inference deducible from it of importance: that these last words of the patriarchs were not merely blessings; neither bold and uncertain conjectures respecting futurity; but absolute and inspired predictions. Jacob unequivocally assumes this power when he says, "Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which *shall* befall you in "*the last days*."

#### I. REUBEN.

V. 3 and 4. "*Reuben, thou art my first-born, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power. Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel, because thou wentest up to thy father's bed; then defiledst thou it; he went up to my couch.*"

Guilt blights the promise of the Spring, and destroys the fruit of the Autumn. In the sad example placed before you, what power is debilitated, what majesty is defaced, what glory is obliterated, what loss is sustained, what penalties are incurred, by the indulgence of one criminal passion! It is recorded for ever against



the slaves of appetite: and the condemnation of Reuben rises in judgment before those who resign the reins of self-government to the desires of the flesh. He lost his birth-right, his dignity, his excellency, his power, his pre-eminence, by obeying the impulses of a depraved nature. The lapse of years could not wipe out the blot which the crimes of his youth had fixed upon his character; and God made the lips of a dying father, at a moment when he would feel the sentence most poignantly, pronounce his high displeasure against such deeds of darkness. In the zenith of manhood Jacob had hailed his first-born; and in the solemnities of death, he is compelled in the bitterness of his heart, and with holy indignation, to strip him of his privileges. And God ratified the patriarch's decision. The priesthood passed to Levi, the double portion to Joseph, and the kingdom to Judah. Of all the tribes of Israel, in point both of number and of power, Reuben was the inferior\*.

## II. AND III. SIMEON AND LEVI.

V. 5—7. “*Simeon and Levi are brethren:  
“ instruments of cruelty are in their habitations.*”

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\* Anc. Univ. Hist. vol. ii. b. i. c. 7. note E. p. 485. Dublin edit. 1745. See also note 2, at the end of this Lecture.



*“ O my soul, come not thou into their secret ;  
 “ unto their assembly mine honour, be not thou  
 “ united : for in their anger they slew a man, and  
 “ in their self-will they digged down a wall.  
 “ Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce ;  
 “ and their wrath, for it was cruel : I will divide  
 “ them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.”*

There is something inexpressibly tender and endearing in the name of “ brethren,” when it is designed to represent two persons inseparably united in the bonds of consanguinity, or of pure and fervent friendship : and the term is equally horrible, when it used, as in the passage before us, to exhibit two persons closely allied in the indulgence of cruelty, the gratification of malignity, and the perpetration of murder. All the unhallowed passions discernible in their separate character acquire double deformity by becoming blended : the mind revolts from the fearful combination ; and we regard them with all the horror we should feel, if we beheld a pair of tigers pass by us, rushing from the slaughter, and covered with blood. Such is the fraternity of these brethren. We overlook the union of nature ; and are able to fix our eyes only upon the bonds of malice and of revenge, which drew them more closely together. Their alliance is the concord of sin and of death.



The holy "soul" of Jacob shrunk from such society. He expressed his indignation and his abhorrence of their conduct at the time; and so far from being extinguished by age, the just and pious resentment glows in the bosom of the dying patriarch to the last moment. He will have no share in the "secret" plotting, no part in the sanguinary "assembly," no portion, no voice, no lot, in the council over which death presides. His "honour" cannot endure an union with treachery, masked under the semblance of accommodation: nor will he be responsible for "the anger," and "the self-will," which by slaughtering the peaceful inhabitants, took the most effectual way of "digging down the wall" of the city \*. Behold, another evidence of the evil of "youthful lusts"--an admonition written in characters of blood. Pollution on the part of the Shechemites exposed them to a violent death; and kindled in the bosoms of the sons of Jacob that "cruel wrath," and that "fierce anger," which unsheathed the "instruments of cruelty," drew down the guilt of murder upon their head, called forth the imprecations of a father in his last hours, substituted a curse for a blessing, deprived them of their inherit-

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See Note 3, at the end of the Lecture.



ance, “divided them in Jacob, and scattered  
 “them in Israel.” These evils arose from the  
 indulgence of forbidden lust on the one side;  
 and on the other from disobedience to the ex-  
 plicit admonition, “vengeance is mine—I will  
 “repay, saith the Lord.” Levi had no inherit-  
 ance among his brethren: but the priesthood  
 was assigned him; and he lived upon their  
 tythes. And Simeon was compelled to accept  
 a portion in the lot of Judah\*.

#### IV. JUDAH.

V. 8—12. “Judah, thou art he whom thy  
 “brethren shall praise; thy hand shall be in the  
 “neck of thine enemies: thy father’s children  
 “shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion’s  
 “whelp; from the prey my son, thou art gone  
 “up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and  
 “as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? The  
 “sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-  
 “giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come,  
 “and unto him shall the gathering of the people  
 “be. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his  
 “asses’ colt unto the choice vine; he washed  
 “his garments in wine, and his clothes in the  
 “blood of grapes. His eyes shall be red with

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\* Josh. xix. 1—9.



“*wine, and his teeth white with milk.*” It will be found in unfolding these parental benedictions, that the several tribes were blessed in terms that corresponded with the name given to their respective progenitors. The name of Judah signified PRAISE: Jacob employs it as a sort of thesis, and says, “Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall *praise!*” The point of the prophecy appears to be this—that dominion was to be vested in the hand of Judah, whose majestic and warlike disposition should excite the admiration of his brethren, of whom he was to be the head: “thy hand shall be in the necks of thine enemies—thy father’s children shall bow down before thee;” and he actually did excel them, both in temporal and spiritual prosperity at home, and in the renown of his achievements abroad and in the field. The same thought is carried on through the whole prediction; and is clothed in all the beautiful imagery of eastern composition. We see this illustrious person growing up as a “lion’s whelp,” in courage and in strength, till he becomes irresistible as an “old lion;” who glutted with slaughter ascends his native mountains, couches in his gloomy solitudes, reposes after his toils, and “who shall rouse him up?” Nor does the glory of this favoured tribe terminate here. Casting his piercing eye, irra-



diated by prophetic illumination, over sixteen hundred and eighty-nine years, Jacob sees the day of Jesus Christ, and hails the sweet majesty which was to absorb all exterior dignity. He discerns the empire which Judah had maintained in defiance of those, who had often attempted to wrest it from his powerful grasp, at length resigned, while the hands of the Messiah hold "a sceptre of righteousness," and the dominion preserved for ages, melts away into a "kingdom not of this world"—a kingdom purely spiritual—a "kingdom that cannot be shaken." That this prediction refers to the coming of the Saviour, and the extinction of the temporal authority of this tribe, and indeed of the whole Jewish nation is, I think, evident, partly from the fitness of the passage itself to those great events, and partly from the division, the contradiction, and even the absurdity of those, who have attempted to explain the prophecy otherwise, and to transfer this rod of dominion elsewhere. If by the term *sceptre* we are to understand to it's full extent, *regal* authority, although it can be satisfactorily proved that Judah did actually maintain the empire, with prodigious struggles, till the time of Christ's advent approached: yet there is a difficulty in explaining how it could be said that the sceptre should be preserved absolutely to the



very period, and not depart till Shiloh came. The solution afforded by Bishop Newton\*, appears to me, upon the whole, the most complete and satisfactory of any which I have seen; and I shall pursue a train of thought which corresponds with his exposition of this prophecy. To apprehend it more readily, allow me to arrange what I have to offer to meet this difficulty under three leading observations:

First, the original word †, translated *sceptre*, signifies a *staff*, or *rod of office*; and will therefore apply to an inferior magistrate as well as a regal one.

Secondly, The term, "*Lawgiver* ‡," may mean, in it's original acceptation "the *Judge* of a tribe;" there is therefore no necessity to apply it here exclusively to a monarch.

Thirdly, by the term "*Shiloh* §," I understand *the MESSIAH*; and for the following reasons:

\* Bp. Newton on the Proph. vol. I. sect. iv. Proph. of Jacob, p. 52, &c.

† שבט. See Taylor's Heb. Concord. on the various senses of the word: Newton as above: Anc. Univ. Hist. vol. II. b. i. c. 7. note G. p. 486, &c. See also note 4 at the end of the Lecture on the different criticisms and opinions respecting this passage.

‡ מחקק. On this and the preceding word see the foregoing writers, also Saur. Disc. &c. sur la Bible. Tome I. Disc. xli. p. 252. &c. Fol.

§ שילה.



1. Almost all the various readings of the word, in the several translations of this passage in different ancient languages, such as the Syriac, the Septuagint, and others, use a corresponding phrase expressive of some distinguishing attribute of the Messiah. Some read it, “The  
“sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a  
“lawgiver from between his feet, until he shall  
“come, who is THE SENT\*: others render it,  
“‘He, whose it is:’ † others again read it,  
“until the Peacemaker come.” ‡ It will be  
evident that these different readings accord well  
with our application of it to the Messiah §.

2. The most respectable Targums, or Jewish paraphrases, agree in applying this passage to the Messiah. They enlarge upon it with singular eloquence and with unusual ardour of expression. And in their comments upon the figurative language employed by the dying patriarch to elucidate the triumph of this august personage, they say “How beautiful is King  
“Messiah, who shall arise out of the house of  
“Judah; he girdeth his loins, he descendeth,

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\* The Vulgate.

† The Syriac; and some copies of the Septuagint ὃ ἀποκείται  
“he for whom it is reserved.”

‡ The Samaritan. Bp. Newton derives שִׁלוֹה from שָׁלָה *tran-*  
*quillus, pacificus fuit.*

§ See Note 5, at the end.



“ he setteth the battle in array against his enemies, and slayeth many kings\*.” This interpretation will serve to shew the sense which the early Jewish writers affixed to the prediction, and particularly to the term *Shiloh*. The Targum of Onkelos, which is more ancient according to general agreement, than the period of our Lord’s incarnation, expressly affirms, as the meaning of the text, “ There shall not be taken away, one having the principality, from the house of Judah, nor a scribe from his children’s children, till Messias come, whose is the kingdom †.”

3. Some later writers, both Jewish and Christian, who have attempted to change the object of the prophecy, have been extremely incoherent and even absurd in their interpretations, have been much puzzled and divided in their applications, and at last, have not been able at all satisfactorily to shew any correspondence between the departure of the dominion from Judah, and the persons to whom they have applied the prediction. It has been supposed of Moses, of Saul, of Jeroboam, of Nebuchadnezzar, without the shadow of a reason ; and it has

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\* Fell’s and Hunter’s Lectures on the Ev. of Christ. Lect. II. p. 35, 36.

† Bp. Newton on the Proph. vol. I. sect. iv. p. 56.



been applied even to David, under whom Judah was so far from *losing* the sceptre, that he *obtained* it at that very period, and held it over all the other tribes.

4. Because when these words are applied to the Messiah, with the exposition which has been given of the terms *sceptre* and *lawgiver*, the prophecy has been exactly fulfilled. For Judah never did lack “a Judge,” or want “a rod of office” till “the Messiah” appeared: but after that he was “cut off,” “the Romans” came and took away their place and nation.” From that period, not only Judah, to whom the dominion was granted by his expiring father, and who maintained it through the longest period of time, but all the tribes have been scattered over the face of the whole earth, without an altar or a judge, without a temple or a sceptre, for nearly eighteen centuries. In the mean time, the “gathering of the people,” or the Gentiles, has been to “the Shiloh,” or Messiah: after whose death they began to “flow together,” and to submit themselves to his righteous government. These proselytes are continually increasing, and shall continue so to do, till in the fulness of time the prediction of Simeon shall be accomplished, and Jesus shall indeed be “a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel.” His attractions



shall be felt yet more powerfully, when at his second appearance, they shall come from the East, and from the West, from the North, and from the South, and shall sit down with him in his kingdom, and he shall “reign for ever and ever.”

The remaining part of the prediction is extremely beautiful, whether it be understood as applying to Judah or to Jesus. In respect to Judah, it describes the richness and fertility of his country; and there are some remarkable coincidences of expression in this prophecy with some future circumstances and some future representations respecting the Messiah. It may be the indulgence of fancy\*, but when I read of “binding his foal to the vine, and his asses’ colt to the choice vine,” I am wafted in imagination to Jerusalem, and see the Saviour riding through its gates in triumph, upon “an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass:” when it is said, “he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes,” I cannot but remember that Jesus “trode the wine-press alone”---that he “stained all his raiment”---that he represented his own sufferings by the “blood of the grape”---and that he, whose

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\* If it be fancy, it is a flight in which the earliest Jewish writers have indulged—See the foregoing appeal to their oldest Targums.



name is the WORD OF GOD, appeared in a vesture dipped in blood: when it is added "his eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk," while the plenty and prosperity of Judah may be intended, it is not altogether inapplicable to Jesus. Suffering (more than once typified by wine) will make the eyes red as well as the juice of the grape; and what agonies more likely to suffuse the languid orbs with that sanguinary hue, than the death of the cross? May not the whiteness of the teeth be an emblem of purity---the purity of the victim? I lay not particular stress upon this interpretation; nor shall I be greatly moved if it be pronounced fanciful; I would rather indulge in fancies which lead me to the Saviour, than in those which allure from him. I had rather meet him in imagination in every word of this prediction, than miss him as some have done altogether, who have not been able to find the Messiah in the whole passage. I had rather turn out of my way to introduce him, than avoid him when he crosses my path. If I forget thee, O Jesus, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth! let these lips be sealed in the silence of the grave, rather than refuse the theme of thy sufferings and of thy dignity. Thou who art Judah's offspring and David's Lord, the life, the



light, the energy of these scriptures, let me die rather than deny thee!

### V. ZEBULUN.

V. 13. “ *Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea: and he shall be for an haven of ships; and his border shall be unto Zidon.*” Had this venerable patriarch lived two hundred and fifty years after the delivery of this prediction, and had he been present when Joshua divided the promised land among the sons of Jacob, he could not have described the portion of Zebulun with greater accuracy. His inheritance extended from the sea of Galilee, otherwise called the lake Tiberias, by which it was bounded on the East, to the Mediterranean, which formed a barrier to its western limitation. What wisdom was that, which already began to mark out the situation of the respective tribes! and what power was that, by which the design announced in prophecy, was carried into complete execution!

### VI. ISSACHAR.

V. 14 and 15. “ *Issachar is a strong ass couching down between two burdens. And he saw that rest was good, and the land that it was*



“ *pleasant ; and bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant unto tribute.*” The passage reads, literally rendered, Issachar is *an ass of bone*, a term sufficiently expressive of prodigious strength. Force of body, and energy of mind, are very frequently separated ; and this powerful tribe is described as destitute of great spirit and courage. The general outline of this prediction is clearly expressed, and has been literally accomplished. The portion of Issachar was “ pleasant :” but it was subjected to oppression, and infested by frequent depredations. We are apt, in the hour of discontent, to say of our neighbours, “ the lot has fallen to them in pleasant places ;” but if we knew all, we should find this “ goodly heritage,” exposed to calamity no less than our own. The most pleasant portions, are frequently, like the lot of Issachar, the most dangerous. They have their peculiar disadvantages ; and these sometimes more than counterbalance their attractions. They excite envy, they encourage attack, they are hard to defend, they may bring us into bondage. Thus Issachar was exposed to the hand of violence ; and in order to preserve his “ pleasant land,” “ he bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant unto tribute.”



## VII. DAN.

V. 16—18. “*Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path; that biteth the horse-heels, so that his rider shall fall backward. I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord!*”—The name *Dan*, signifies a *Judge*; and from this circumstance the prediction of the patriarch runs in a corresponding strain. The right of judging did not belong to Dan, more than to the other tribes: nor is it once intimated that he should have the pre-eminence in this point; since the language employed is—he shall “judge his people, *as*” or “*like*” one of the tribes of Israel. It may be asked why a right so confessedly general, should be so particularly and expressly awarded to him as an individual? I imagine for the following reason. Dan, as well as some others of the sons of Jacob, was the offspring of a *concubine*; and unless this right had been expressly assigned him, the descendants of Jacob by his *wives* might have usurped authority over him, and his brethren. As he is first mentioned of that line, to him the right is given; but that which is said of him, is to be understood of them all. The meaning of the grant will then be, that he (and with him, his brethren) should not be subjected



to any other tribe, but should have the absolute right of judgment within himself upon all occasions without the interference of his brethren: in other words, that the sons of the concubines, should have equal privileges and portions, with the sons of Leah and of Rachel.

The other parts of the prediction are highly expressive of the subtilty of that tribe, whose disposition, it should seem, was to subdue their enemies more by cunning than by open violence; and this character given them by their great progenitor, was justified and exhibited, when, two hundred and eighty-three years afterward, they “came to Laish, to a people that  
“were *quiet and secure*, and smote them with  
“the edge of the sword, and burned the city  
“with fire, and there was no deliverer.”—“And  
“they built a city, and dwelt therein, and  
“called the name of the city Dan, after the  
“name of Dan their father\*.” How strikingly expressive of the sudden blow given by craftiness to security, is the image of “the adder †

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\* Judges xviii. 27—29.

† The Vulgate and the Septuagint have used the word *Cerastes*, which is a kind of serpent, so called from it's having two fleshy horns: it's property is to hide itself in the sand, and to fasten upon whatever animal passes over it's insidious retreat. See Dr. Geddes and Anc. Univ. Hist. in locum.



“ in the path, biting the horse’s heels,” and throwing “ the rider !”

Thus far had the patriarch proceeded when the powers of nature were exhausted ; and the direction of his mind immediately discovers itself. The magnet is not more faithful to the northern pole, than are his affections to his unchangeable Friend. Constrained to break off in the midst of his benedictions, while he pauses, he prays, and with the confidence of faith exclaims, “ I have waited for thy salvation, O “ Lord !”—Nor did he wait in vain ! Recovering a little strength, before he went hence to be no more seen, he resumed the interesting and momentous subject, which weakness had suspended, and addressed.

### VIII. GAD.

V. 19. “ *Gad—a troop shall overcome him : but he shall overcome at the last.*” The name *Gad*, signifies “ *a troop*,” and the dying father avails himself of it, to depict those vicissitudes of war which his posterity should suffer. And thus was it accomplished ; the inheritance of Gad lay beyond Jordan, exposed to the incursions of the Arabs, the Ammonites, the Moabites, and other nations lying eastward, hostile to Israel. As in all such contentions, so Gad



was sometimes subdued and sometimes was conqueror: but respecting most of them he had ultimately the advantage, and maintained the possession of his allotted territory. One instance of his success, you may read at your leisure (for why should I occupy the time so far advanced, in detailing scenes of blood at which humanity shudders?) in the first book of Chronicles, the fifth chapter, from the eighteenth to the twenty-second verse, inclusive. Thus also the Christian advances—"faint yet pursuing." He is often foiled, but will finally come off "more than conqueror." Like "Gad, a troop may overcome him; but he shall surely overcome at the last."

## IX. ASHUR.

V. 20. "*Out of Ashur his bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal dainties.*" This language is highly descriptive of the extreme fertility of that track of country which fell to the share of Ashur: an inheritance which not merely furnished the *necessaries*, but also the *luxuries* of human life, in its prolific produce. Such will be the portion of the Christian, when the good land which rises before him, shall be divided by the Saviour's hand among the sons of God! and who does not desire to share the "royal dain-



“ties,” of that spiritual feast, of which our best ordinances are only types, and are bestowed as refreshments by the way?

### X. NAPHTALI.

V. 21. “*Naphtali is a hind let loose: he giveth goodly words.*” That a “hind let loose” should be figurative of the liberty enjoyed by Naphtali: and that “giving goodly words” should imply eloquence, I can readily conceive—but for neither the one nor the other do I recollect that in any instance Naphtali had the pre-eminence of his brethren. The total want of connection between the images employed and the future situation of Naphtali, so as that the one should be the counterpart of the other, which the prophecy has been to the circumstances of the other tribes in every preceding instance; and the incoherence and want of unity between the first and the last clause of the same verse; convince me that something is wrong. The learned Bochart removes the whole difficulty, and elucidates the passage, only by altering a little the punctuation of the original; and it then reads “*Naphtali is a spreading tree, shooting forth beautiful branches\*.*” This

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\* See Dr Geddes’ translation and remarks on this verse: also *Anc. Univ. Hist.* vol. II. b. i. p. 492. Note O. Also Bochart *Hierog.* at the end.



rendering agrees with the translation of the Septuagint, with the Chaldee paraphrase, with the Arabic version; it renders the passage intelligible; and the accomplishment of the prophecy is complete. Nor are we to wonder that the changing a few arbitrary points should make so essential a difference in translation: when a very trifling alteration, will sometimes make a considerable change in the sense of a word even in our own language.

A modern critic has, however, removed every difficulty, and at the same time translated the passage, as it appears to me, more consistently with the original, and in greater harmony with the connection. In blessing every tribe the patriarch had preserved a distinction of imagery; but if the translation of Bochart be admitted, Naphtali invades the right of Joseph; and the same metaphor is continued in the succeeding benediction. This ingenious author proposes to read it “Naphtali is a deer roaming at liberty; “he shooteth forth spreading branches”—or “majestic antlers.” Here the distinction of imagery is preserved; at the same time that the same idea is conveyed. Still the fecundity of the tribe, and the fertility of his lot, is exhibited. Abundance of pasturage will no less promote the branching of the horns of the stag,



and the growth and beauty of his shape, than richness of soil cause the "spreading terebinth," or any other tree, to increase in vegetation. Upon every account, therefore, I prefer this last reading\*.

Of all the tribes Naphtali appears to have multiplied the most rapidly. He had but four sons, when he went down into Egypt, and when his posterity came out of it, in the course of only about two centuries, they mustered upwards of fifty-three thousand men, capable of bearing arms!

#### XI. JOSEPH.

V. 22—26. *"Joseph is a fruitful bough,  
" even a fruitful bough by a well: whose branches  
" run over the wall. The archers have sorely  
" grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him.  
" But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of  
" his hands were made strong; by the hands of  
" the mighty God of Jacob: from thence is the  
" Shepherd, the Stone of Israel. Even by the  
" God of thy father, who shall help thee, and by  
" the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings*

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\* See *Scripture Illustrated*, by the Editor of Calmet; in which there is a paper expressly on this subject, satisfactorily justifying this translation.



“ *of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth*  
 “ *under, blessings of the breasts, and of the*  
 “ *womb: The blessings of thy father have pre-*  
 “ *vailed above the blessings of thy progenitors,*  
 “ *unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills:*  
 “ *they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the*  
 “ *crown of the head of him that was separate*  
 “ *from his brethren.*”—How the good man’s  
 bosom glows, while he pronounces the paternal  
 blessing upon this darling son, and predicts his  
 prosperity! How he unites the retrospect of the  
 past, with the promise of the future! How elo-  
 quent is affection! And what a burst of love  
 and of piety, from the pallid lips, is directed to-  
 wards his long-lost, restored, admired Joseph!  
 I do not love to paraphrase Scripture language:  
 I think it is never done without weakening the  
 divinely energetic original; yet there is much  
 in this language, that appears to require eluci-  
 dation; and I cannot find a way to express the  
 sense in which I understand the passage, except  
 by doing that, which, however practised by emi-  
 nent men, and sanctioned by custom, I cannot  
 approve—throwing it into other language. He  
 says in effect—‘ As for *thee*, my son, like “ a  
 ‘ “ fruitful bough,” nourished by a perpetual  
 ‘ spring, thy “ branches” shall spread, and thy  
 ‘ posterity shall widely diffuse themselves, in  
 ‘ the land promised by the God of thy fathers.  
 ‘ “ The Archers,” thy envious brethren, “ have



“ sorely shot at thee, and hated thee ;” but the  
 “ arms” of my God have sustained thee ; and  
 not only sustained thee, but through his fa-  
 vour thou hast been the support of thy  
 family, and hast nourished me in old age :  
 thou hast been “ the shepherd and stone of  
 “ Israel ;” and art a type of him who shall  
 come, and in a more eminent degree bear that  
 character and sustain that office. Fear not :  
 “ the Almighty shall bless thee” with the  
 sweet influences “ of heaven,” and shall give  
 thee the dew, with the early and the latter  
 rain : “ the deep” shall yield it’s tribute also,  
 and pour forth it’s blessings at thy feet : thy  
 posterity shall not waste, nor shall there be  
 barrenness in thy tribe ; for I have blessed  
 thee, with no common regard. I have not  
 retailed “ the blessings of my progenitors” in  
 blessing thee : but my “ blessings have pre-  
 “ vailed” on thy behalf “ above” them all, and  
 are heard on yonder “ everlasting hills.” May  
 they increase and abound ! yea, they shall be  
 heard and answered ; “ on the head of Joseph”  
 shall they rest, and as a “ crown” shall they  
 encircle the brow of him, who was “ separated”  
 from his family by malice—separated “ from  
 “ his brethren” by holiness—and separated  
 by his God for good !—Thus was the tribe  
 of Joseph actually distinguished till Christ  
 came.



## XII. BENJAMIN.

V. 27. “ *Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf:*  
 “ *in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at*  
 “ *night he shall divide the spoil.*” The warlike disposition of Benjamin’s posterity is the manifest subject of this prediction, and is exhibited under an allusion to the ferocity of one of the most rapacious and persevering animals among the beasts of prey. The evidence of the accomplishment of this prophecy, in the whole history of this tribe, is as clear, as are the terms in which their temper is foretold. I need only appeal to one striking instance of their fierceness, which is recorded in the twentieth chapter of the book of Judges, and which will be present to every one’s recollection, when for three days they withstood the assaults of the armies of Israel, on a memorable occasion, and twice routed them, being defeated at the last with considerable difficulty.

V. 28. Thus have we endeavoured to establish the purpose of the present Lecture: for  
 “ *all these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and*  
 “ *this is it that their father spake unto them;*  
 “ *and blessed them; every one according to his*  
 “ *blessing he blessed them.*” We ask you only to see him resign his interests in this world; and then we will release your attention from the



subject, to ponder in your own hearts the solemn scene, and to prepare for the eventful period when you shall be stretched upon the same couch of mortality.

V. 29—33. “ *And he charged them, and said*  
 “ *unto them, I am to be gathered unto my peo-*  
 “ *ple: bury me with my fathers, in the cave that*  
 “ *is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, in the*  
 “ *cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is*  
 “ *before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which*  
 “ *Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the*  
 “ *Hittite, for a possession of a burying place.*  
 “ *(There they buried Abraham and Sarah his*  
 “ *wife, there they buried Isaac and Rebe-*  
 “ *kah his wife, and there I buried Leah.) The*  
 “ *purchase of the field and of the cave that is*  
 “ *therein, was from the children of Heth. And*  
 “ *when Jacob had made an end of commanding*  
 “ *his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed,*  
 “ *and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered*  
 “ *unto his people.*” We usually love to know

how great characters leave the troubled scenes of time; and we are gratified to-night in witnessing the tranquil close of an agitated life. There are certain great principles in our nature which discover themselves in the very article of death; and among these is the well-known propensity which we feel to be anxious respecting the rites of sepulture. We are not satisfied with



having enjoyed the converse of those whom we loved while they were yet alive, but we wish to repose by them when dead. It is our last desire that our bones should lie by their bones; and that our dust should mingle with their dust. It is the last earthly thing that occupies our attention. Thus was it with Jacob: and that he regarded it with no common solicitude, is evident from the reiterated charge, and from the particular description of the spot again and again repeated. Recognize in the dying patriarch your own feelings, and learn that he is “flesh of your flesh.” See, how strongly nature lives with him! He has done with the things of time. They attract, they torment him no more. His earthly career hastens to close. He is breathing the last sigh. One thought, and only one is stolen from heaven, and it hovers over the dust of his departed family. Lay the map of the world before him—he regards not it’s empires—his eye glides over them, in search of another object, it fixes upon a little obscure field, and there he buries his remaining earthly wishes. Remove that spot, and the whole globe is nothing to him: it excites no interest, it retains no further tie upon him. There his last reflections linger, till they are recalled to the skies. “There,” said he, “they buried Abraham, and Sarah his wife, there they buried Isaac, and



“ Rebekah his wife, and there I buried Leah.”  
 With feelings something akin to these, the Christian sends his thoughts to Calvary, and his affections linger upon the sacred mount with mournful delight, while he reflects “ There they  
 “ crucified him.”

But the bonds of nature could no longer hold a spirit so prepared for heaven. The last wish was expressed; the last struggle was felt; and he fled to enjoy the immediate presence of God, and to join the society of those, whom, living, he loved, and dying, he fondly remembered!—

“ Let me die the death of the righteous; and  
 “ let my last end be like his!”—



## NOTES.

## NOTES TO THE FOURTH LECTURE.

NOTE 1.—Respecting the prevailing opinion in all ages, that dying men prophesied, I mentioned in the preceding lecture the following illustrations. Patroclus predicts the death of Hector:

Αλλο δέ τοι ἔρέω, σὺ δ' ἐνὶ φρεσὶ βάλλεο σῆσιν,  
 Οὐ θην εἰδ' αὐτὸς δηρὸν βέη, ἀλλὰ τοι ἤδη  
 Αἴγχι παρέσθηκεν θάνατος καὶ μοῖρα κραταίῃ,  
 Χερσὶ δαμέντ' Ἀχιλῆος ἀμύμονος Αἰακίδαο.

*Hom. Il. tom. ii. l. xvi. v. 851. Foulis edit. Glasguae.*

But thou, imperious! bear my latest breath;  
 The gods inspire it, and it sounds thy death.  
 Insulting man! thou shalt be soon, as I;  
 Black fate hangs o'er thee, and thy hour draws nigh;  
 Ev'n now on life's last verge I see thee stand,  
 I see thee fall, and by Achilles' hand!

*Pope's Hom. Iliad, b. xvi. l. 1026—1030. vol. iii.*

Thus Hector also predicts under similar circumstances the death of Achilles.

Τὸν δὲ καταθνήσκων προσέφη κορυθαίολος Ἑκτωρ  
 Ἡ σ' εὖ γινώσκων προτιόσσομαι, εἰδ' ἄρ' ἔμελλον  
 Πείσειν· ἧ γὰρ σοί γε σιδήρεος ἔνδοθι θυμός·  
 Φράζεο νῦν, μήτοι τι θεῶν μήνιμα γένωμαι  
 Ἡματι τῷ, ὅτε κέν σε Πάρις καὶ Φοῖβος Ἀπολλων,  
 Ἐσθλὸν ἔόντ', ὀλέσωσιν ἐνὶ Σκαιῇσι πύλῃσιν.

*Hom. Il. tom. ii. l. xxii. v. 355. Foulis edit. Glasguae.*



Then thus the chief his dying accents drew ;  
 Thy rage, implacable ! too well I knew :  
 The furies that relentless breast have steel'd,  
 And curst thee with a heart that cannot yield.  
 Yet think, a day will come, when fates decree  
 And angry gods, shall wreak this wrong on thee ;  
 Phœbus and Paris shall avenge my fate,  
 And stretch thee here, before the Scæan gate.

*Pope's Hom. Iliad, b. xxii. l. 445—452. vol. iv.*

Plato puts the same sentiment into the mouth of Socrates, at his condemnation. Τὸ δὲ δὴ μετὰ τῆτο ἐπιθυμῶ ὑμῖν χρησιμῶδῆσαι, ὃ καταψηφισάμενοί μὲν. καὶ γὰρ εἰμι ἤδη ἐνταῦθα, ἐν ᾧ μάλιστα ἄνθρωποι χρησιμῶδῶσιν, ὅταν μέλλωσιν ἀποθανεῖσθαι. He then goes on to name some events likely to arise after his death—and concludes, ταῦτα μὲν ἐν ὑμῖν τοῖς καταψηφισαμένοις μαρτυρούμενος, ἀπαλλάττομαι.

*Plato. Dial. Apol. Soc. p. 115, 116. edit. Oxon. 1752.*

Xenophon in his apology for Socrates, preceding Memorabilium, represents him as justifying his own prediction under those circumstances, by maintaining it as the universal sentiment of the world at the time, and by appealing to those very instances in Homer, which I have cited. Ἀλλὰ μέντοι (φάναι αὐτὸν) ἀνέθηκε μὲν καὶ Ομηρος, ἔστιν οἷς τῶν ἐν καὶ αὐτῶν τῇ βίᾳ προγινώσκειν τὰ μέλλοντα· βέλομαι δὲ καὶ ἐγὼ χρησιμῶδῆσαι τι· &c.

*Xenoph. Apol. Soc. p. 14. Londini edit. 1720.*

The same Writer in his Cyropædia, makes his dying hero thus speak—comparing death to a sleep—Εννοήσατε δὲ, ἔφη, ὅτι ἐγγύτερον μὲν τῷ ἀνθρωπίνῳ θανάτῳ ἔστιν ὕπνῳ· ἢ δὲ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ ψυχὴ τότε δήπερ θειοτάτη καταφαίνεται, καὶ τότε τὶ τῶν μελλόντων προορᾷ· τότε γὰρ, ὡς εἴποιε, μάλιστα ἐλευθερεῖται.

*Xenoph. Cyropæd. tom. iv. lib. viii. p. 339. Duodec. ex. edit. Hutchinson. excud. Foulis, Glasguae. 1767.*

The exordium of the eighteenth book of the Hist. of Diod. Sic. tends throughout to illustrate this opinion. He quotes the sentiment of Pythagoras, who argues the immortality of the soul from the circumstance, which he firmly believed, and which was the current



opinion, of men predicting events at their death. He passes on to notice the account which Homer gives, and which has been already noticed, of two of his heroes. He then comes to the point of his history to which these remarks tended, and observes that Alexander foresaw, and foretold the divisions which would arise out of his death. The whole is well worthy perusal, as an exhibition of the sentiment universally prevailing on this point.

*Diod. Sic. Lib. xviii. p. 586. Rhod. edit. 1604.*

NOTE 2. Respecting Reuben, the Writers of the Anc. Univ. History observe—"The sequel of the Jewish history shews, that the  
 " tribe of Reuben did still remain in obscurity, and without any of  
 " the marks of distinction which used to be annexed to the right of  
 " primogeniture, such as a double portion, supreme authority, and  
 " the priesthood. Accordingly the Jewish Expositors, especially the  
 " Bereshith Rabbah, or large comment on Genesis, tell us (Beresh.  
 " Rab. sect. 98.) that he fell from the threefold dignity, viz. והמלכות  
 " הבכורה הכהונה primogeniture, priesthood, and royal dignity:  
 " But because thou art fallen, continues the commentator, thy pri-  
 " mogeniture is given to Joseph (who accordingly had two portions  
 " allotted to him,) the priesthood to Levi, and the sceptre to Judah.  
 " And where it is said of this last (Gen. xlix. 8.) thy brethren shall  
 " praise thee, he paraphrases it thus: בל אחיך נקראים על שמך  
 " Thy brethren shall be called by thy name, i. e. they will  
 " not say, I am a Reubenite, or a Simeonite, but a יהודי Jehudi,  
 " a Jew."

*Anc. Univ. Hist. vol. ii. c. 7. p. 484, 485. Note. Dublin edit. 1745.*

Dr. Geddes renders "unstable as water thou shalt not excel"—  
 "like water thou hast lapsed."—Sep. ἐξυγρῖσας. Vulg. "Effusus  
 "es."—and applies it to the lapsing of all Reuben's former pre-  
 eminence.

NOTE 3. The same critic renders, "they digged down a wall"—  
 in reference to Simeon and Levi—"they extirpated a chief"—  
 "The Hebrew is עקרו שור, which is rendered by the Sep. ἐξεν-  
 " ῥοσπασαν ταυρον, They ham-strung, or houghed a bull. Vulg.



“ *Suffoderunt murum.* And this is the meaning most generally affixed to שור, &c.

“ *Geddes' Crit. Rem. p. 144. on Gen. xlix. 6.*

The writers of the Anc. Univ. Hist. remark on these brethren—  
 “ Jacob's words imply a double dispersion, viz. of the two tribes from  
 “ one another, and their being interspersed among the rest. And  
 “ accordingly Levi had no inheritance among his brethren in the  
 “ land of Canaan, but had a certain number of cities assigned to it  
 “ in every tribe. As for that of Simeon it had properly but a por-  
 “ tion of Judah's inheritance (Josh. xix. i. *et seq.*) if we except some  
 “ few places which they got upon mount Seir, and in the wilds of  
 “ the valley of Gedor. 1 Chron. iv. 39, 40.”

“ *Anc. Univ. Hist. vol. ii. c. 7: p. 485.*

NOTES 4 and 5. I cannot refrain from giving at length the excellent remarks of the writers of the Anc. Univ. Hist. on this important reference to the Messiah, contained in the predictions relative to Judah, his tribe, and his future lot. “ The sense, as well as completion, of  
 “ this noble prophecy, being very much disputed between the Jews  
 “ and us, we have endeavoured to render the latter part of the verse  
 “ more agreeably to the original \*, which in it's plain and obvious  
 “ sense affirms that the Sceptre shall not depart from Judah—till  
 “ both Shiloh was come, and the nations gathered unto, or brought  
 “ to his obedience. This version is further proved by the event; for  
 “ the Jews did not lose their sceptre, or Sanhedrim, which was their  
 “ בית דין Beth din, or highest court of judicature and supreme legis-  
 “ lative power, till the heathen became converts to Christianity, of  
 “ whom Cornelius was the first: and the Jews themselves own, that  
 “ this supreme court did still subsist, from the time of Moses the founder  
 “ of it, to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. They like-  
 “ wise own, that the word שבט Sheveth, which we translate sceptre,  
 “ doth not always signify the royal power of dignity, but some-  
 “ times only the legislative. The latter Jews therefore, finding them-  
 “ selves pinched by this prophecy, rather than allow the received in-  
 “ terpretation of the ancients, which is agreeable to our's, have fallen  
 “ into various absurd notions, which they are not ashamed to defend

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\* “ Until Shiloh be come, and the people be gathered unto him.”



“ with a zeal peculiar to them. Thus some will have the meaning of  
 “ this passage to be, that the Messiah shall not come, till Shiloh, the  
 “ place so called, be destroyed, or the Jewish monarchy be at an  
 “ end. Others by Sheveth understand a tribe, which that word also  
 “ signifies, and think the meaning to be, that Judah should not cease  
 “ to be a tribe till the coming of the Messiah: in which they have  
 “ been also followed by some Christians; because that tribe did visi-  
 “ bly subsist as such till the destruction of Jerusalem—but so did  
 “ that of Levi. However, many of our modern Jews stand stiffly to  
 “ this sense, and scruple not to affirm, that it has subsisted, not only  
 “ to that time, but even to this very day, pure and unmixed. Others  
 “ add, that it retains still a kind of sceptre, or royal power, beyond  
 “ the river Euphrates, and that the Nassi, or head of it, is a prince  
 “ lineally descended from Judah, whose splendour, dignity and  
 “ power, over his own tribe, is little inferior to that of a king—but  
 “ *credat Judæus*—. ’Tis certain we have only their bare word for  
 “ this imaginary kingdom. They likewise disagree not with us, but  
 “ even among themselves, about the meaning of the word מחקק  
 “ Mechokek, law-giver.

“ As to the word שִׁלֹּה Shiloh, though it be almost universally  
 “ owned to mean the Messiah, yet as to it’s original signification  
 “ there is no small disagreement. St. Jerome reads it Shaloach,  
 “ from שָׁלַח Shalach, *to send*, reading ח for ה. Others from שָׁלָה  
 “ Shalah, *to be peaceable*, and understand by Shiloh a peace-maker.  
 “ Others derive it שִׁיל Shil, which they will have to signify *a Son*,  
 “ because שְׁלִיָּה Shilihah, or Shilijah, signifies the secundine of a  
 “ woman \*: but it is plain the first of these is no where to be found  
 “ in the Old Testament, and the second only in one place, where it  
 “ most probably signifies the secundine. A modern Critic takes the  
 “ word Shiloh to signify *the end*, and the sense of the words to be,  
 “ that from the time the sceptre comes into the tribe of Judah, it  
 “ will continue in it, till that tribe be at an end: but his opinion has  
 “ been lately confuted, among many others, by M. Saurin, in an  
 “ elaborate discourse on that subject. Another modern author tells

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\* “ That wherein the infant is wrapped; and thence, by a metonymy,  
 “ the infant itself.”



“ us, that it ought to be derived from שִׁלָּה *Shulah*, to *fatigue*, be  
 “ tired, suffer, and to be applied by the sufferings of the Messiah :  
 “ but without fatiguing our readers any further, the most probable  
 “ sense of the word, if the change of a letter be allowed, will be  
 “ that of the Septuagint, Onkelos, and some others ; who read it  
 “ שִׁלֹּן *Sheloh*, that is, *he to whom it belongs*, ו and ה being often  
 “ interchanged in the sacred book, (Vid. 2 Sam. xvi. 10 and 18.) the  
 “ sense will be plainly this, that the sceptre, or legislative power,  
 “ shall not depart from, but be deposited in, the tribe of Judah,  
 “ until the right owner, or he, *Sheló*, to whom it of right belongs,  
 “ has made his appearance in the world. This sense seems the most  
 “ easy, natural, and agreeable to the original, as well as the most  
 “ applicable to Christ, the King of Kings. As for the redundant  
 “ ו in שִׁלֹּן *Shilo*, it is agreeable to the property of the word *Ehevi*,  
 “ as the grammarians speak.”

*Anc. Univ. Hist. vol. II. c. 7. p. 486—488. Note G. Dublin  
 edit. of 1745.*

Bp. Newton has criticised very much at length upon the same pas-  
 sage, and has accumulated on this point many evidences exactly  
 corresponding with the testimony just cited. “ The word שֶׁבֶט  
 “ *Shebet*, which we translate a *sceptre*, signifies a *rod*, or *staff* of  
 “ any kind; and particularly the rod or staff which belonged to each  
 “ tribe as an ensign of their authority; and thence it is transferred  
 “ to signify a *tribe*, as being united under one rod, or staff of go-  
 “ vernment; or a *ruler* of a tribe; and in this sense it is used twice  
 “ in this very chapter.—Ver. 16. ‘ Dan shall judge his people,  
 “ ‘ as one of the tribes, or *rulers* of Israel:’—and again, ver. 28.  
 “ ‘ All these are the twelve tribes, or *rulers* of Israel.’ It signifies  
 “ the same in 2 Sam. vii. 7. 1 Chron. xvii. 6. The word doth in-  
 “ deed sometimes signify a *Sceptre*, but that is apt to convey an idea  
 “ of kingly authority, which was not the thing intended here: and  
 “ the Seventy translate it ἀρχων a *ruler* (ὅτι ἐκλεῖψε ἀρχων ἐξ Ἰσραὴλ.  
 “ Sept.) which answers better to a lawgiver in the following clause.”—  
 Again—“ The sense of the word *sceptre* will help us to fix and de-  
 “ termine the meaning of the other word מְשִׁכֶּה *mechokek*, which we  
 “ translate a *law-giver*. For if they are not synonymous, they are



“ not very different. Such as the government is, such must be the  
 “ law-giver. The government was only of a single tribe, and the  
 “ law-giver could be of no more. Nor had the tribe of Judah at any  
 “ time a legislative authority over all the other tribes, no, not even  
 “ in the reigns of David and Solomon. (See 1 Chron. xxv. 1. Ezra  
 “ viii. 20. 1 Chron. xxix. 22; in all these instances every thing was  
 “ done with the consent and approbation of the princes and rulers of  
 “ Israel.) Indeed the whole nation had but one law, and one law-  
 “ giver, in the strict sense of the word. The king himself was not  
 “ properly a law-giver; he was only to have ‘ a copy of the law,’ &c.  
 “ Deut. xvii. 18, &c. Moses was truly, as he is styled, *the law-giver*,  
 “ Num. xxi. 18. Deut. xxxiii. 21. and when the word is applied to  
 “ any other person, or persons, as Judah is twice called, by the  
 “ Psalmist, *my law-giver* (Ps. lx. 7. cviii. 8.) it is used in a lower  
 “ signification. For it signifies not only a law-giver, but a *judge*;  
 “ not only one who maketh laws, but likewise one who exerciseth  
 “ jurisdiction: and in the Greek it is translated *ηγουμενος*, a leader,  
 “ or *president*; (*και ηγουμενος εκ των μνηων αυτου*. Sept.) in the Chal-  
 “ dee, a scribe; (*neque scriba a filiis filiorum ejus*. Chald.) in the  
 “ Syriac, an *expositor*; (*et expositor de inter pedes ejus*. Syr.) and  
 “ in our English Bible, it is elsewhere translated a *governor*. (Judges  
 “ v. 14.) The *law-giver* therefore is to be taken in a restrained  
 “ sense, as well as the *sceptre*; and perhaps it cannot be translated  
 “ better than *Judge*.” He goes on to produce the different readings  
 and explanations of the word *Shiloh*, which have been already cited  
 in the note of the Anc. Univ. Hist. or which are contained in some  
 critical remarks of Dr. Geddes about to follow: but he thus ably re-  
 futes the rendering of M. Le Clerk, who refused to find the Messiah  
 in this illustrious passage: and who translates “ until Shiloh come,”  
 “ until the end,”—“ for he says, that Shiloh signifies *finis ejus*, aut  
 “ *cessatio*; his end, or ceasing, and that it may be referred to the law-  
 “ giver, or to the Sceptre, or to Judah himself.” (“ He says that  
 “ שִׁלּוֹה *Shiloh* is the same as שִׁלּוֹ *Shilo*, and שִׁל *Shil* may be de-  
 “ rived from שׁוּל *Shul*, and *Shul* is the same as שָׁלָה *Shalah*, which  
 “ in Chaldee signifies *cessare, desinere*—*finis aut cessatio verti poterit*.  
 “ Hoc posito, *finis ejus poterit ad legislatorem, aut ad sceptrum re-*  
 “ ferri, aut etiam ad ipsum Judam. Comment. in loc.”) But the



Bishop well remarks—"If it be referred to the *law-giver*, or to the  
 " *sceptre*, what is it but an unmeaning tautology? 'There shall be  
 " ' a law-giver as long as there shall be a law-giver! There shall  
 " ' not be an end of the sceptre, till the end of the Sceptre come!'   
 " If it be referred to Judah, or to the tribe of Judah, the thing is by  
 " no means true: for the tribe of Judah subsisted long after they had  
 " lost the kingdom, and were deprived of all royal authority." He  
 goes on to quote the Targums, the authors of the Talmud, and a  
 variety of other testimonies, and then concludes—"I think no  
 " doubt can remain, that by *the coming of Shiloh* is meant the coming  
 " of the Messiah."

*Newton on Proph. vol. 1. Dissert. iv. p. 52—56, passim.*

Dr. Geddes, who labours to destroy the reference of this passage  
 to the Messiah, nevertheless collects many important criticisms upon  
 it. He says—"As the explanation of the whole passage depends  
 " chiefly on the meaning of one word שִׁילֹה, Shiloh; let us endea-  
 " vour to find out that meaning. And let us see how the word has  
 " been rendered by ancient interpreters. Sep. τα αποκειμενα αυτω  
 " in the four printed editions, and in most of the Greek Fathers: but  
 " three MSS. with Copt. have ο αποκειται αυτω. Seven have only  
 " ο αποκειται; which according to Justin Mart. and some other  
 " Greek Fathers, was the original reading of Sep. and rendered by  
 " the Latins *cui repositum est*, or *cui reservatum est*. This was also  
 " the reading of Aquila and Symmachus. Syr. מן דדיליה הי *to whom*  
 " *it (the sceptre) belongs*. Onk. מלכותא משיחא דדיליה היא ---  
 " *The Messiah, whose is the kingdom*. So equivalently both the  
 " Thargums and Pers.—Saadias אלדי הי לה in the same mean-  
 " ing with Syr.—Arab. Erp. and Gr. Ven. retain the Hebrew word  
 " שִׁילֹה, Σιλων.---Singular is the rendering of the Latin Vulgate *qui*  
 " *mittendus est*, 'who is to be sent.' The translator seems to have  
 " read in his copy שִׁלֹח or שִׁלֹח; a *Heth* for a *He*: and this  
 " reading was preferred by Helvicus, Grotius, and some others; but  
 " is now generally given up, even by the Roman Catholic inter-  
 " preters."

*Ged. Crit. Rem. p. 144. on Gen. xlix. 10.*

The Abbé Le Pluche remarks on this passage, in his incomparable  
 treatise, "The staff, or sceptre, *Scerret* (whence the *Sceptos* and *Scep-*



“ *tron* of the Greeks, and the *Scipio* of the Latins) is a vague term,  
 “ whose meaning varies according to the quality of the person that  
 “ wears it. In the hand of an old man or of a traveller, it is a staff  
 “ either of support or defence. (2 Sam. xxviii. 21.) It is a hook in  
 “ the hand of a shepherd. (Psal. xxiii. 4. *Hebr.*) In the hand of a  
 “ provoked master who beats his slave, it is an instrument of wrath.  
 “ (Prov. xxiii. 13.) In the hand of a King, it is the mark of his so-  
 “ vereignty. (Ps. xlv. 7. *Hebr.*) Finally, it is a *Staff of Honour*, a  
 “ mark of distinction, in the hand of a Chief of a Family, or of an  
 “ Inspector who makes the lists and the reviews. The kind of staff  
 “ *here* meant must be determined by the quality of him who wears it.  
 “ He is named in the other part of the verse: it is a chief of a fa-  
 “ mily, an inspector, a man who has an authority in the family, who  
 “ presides over the council of the tribe, who makes the enumeration  
 “ and the list of it. (*Mehokek.*) This last term is very well known  
 “ in the scriptures, and signifies properly a man invested with a dig-  
 “ nity or post, who keeps a list of those under him. The chiefs of  
 “ the troops that came to the assistance of the people of God against  
 “ Sisera, are called by that name. (Judg. v. 14.) The first men of  
 “ Israel came to a ceremony with their chief, or their leader at their  
 “ head. (*Mehokek.* Num. xxi. 18.)”

“ But was it a custom for those chiefs, or men in post, for the  
 “ maintaining of polity, to wear a staff of honour for distinction’s  
 “ sake? Nothing can be more certain. Deborah congratulates the  
 “ chiefs of the families of Machir, or of the half-tribe of Manasses,  
 “ on the other side of Jordan, and the commandants of Zebulon,  
 “ who came to the assistance of Baruc, at the head of their troops,  
 “ and having in hand the staff of inspector; or the sceptre that cha-  
 “ racterized the officer charged with the inspection of the enumera-  
 “ tion (*be Scevet sopher.*) *cum baculo numerantis, or censentis populos.*  
 “ Judg. v. 14. Every one knows what a precious treasure the dis-  
 “ covery of a well in the deserts of Arabia is. God having shewed  
 “ to Moses a well of spring-water (Num. xxi. 17 and 18.) the digging  
 “ of it out was made with great joy and apparatus. The Israelites  
 “ on the occasion of this public jubilation sung the following words:  
 “ ‘ May the waters of this well rise! Sing the happy discovery of  
 “ ‘ this well, which the chiefs of Israel caused to be digged, and at  
 “ ‘ the opening of which the principals of the people have been pre-



“ ‘ sent, with their leader at their head, and bearing their staves of  
 “ ‘ honour.’ *Cum præside, (Mehokek) et cum baculis suis.*”

“ There remains but a short explanation more to give of the word  
 “ *Shiloh*, which, (as it was translated by the author of the *Biblia*  
 “ *Vulgata*) signifies *The Envoy*, and which being interpreted as it is  
 “ universally read in the Hebrew, according to the Old Samaritan text,  
 “ signified, *the Pacifick, the Mediator of peace*. Being taken in this last  
 “ sense, it comes from the word *Shalah*, from which the Latins derived  
 “ the words *salus* and *salvus*.” Accordingly this writer applies the  
 “ passage to the Messiah, who,” he says, “ is sufficiently recognizable  
 “ by the concurrence of his three most remarkable characteristics,  
 “ *viz.* of receiving the homage of his brethren, of subduing nations  
 “ that are his enemies, and of borrowing the greatest lustre and testi-  
 “ mony from the duration of his own tribe up to the time when he  
 “ comes to receive the adorations and obedience of the Gentiles.  
 “ Does history shew us any man re-uniting these characters in him-  
 “ self? The whole is completely fulfilled, in *Jesus* the son of Mary,  
 “ born at Bethlehem, in the time of the Emperor Augustus.” Ac-  
 cordingly he proceeds to demonstrate the way in which these leading  
 features apply to him, and in which they can apply to him only.

*Abbé Le Pluche's Truth of the Gospel demonstrated, vol. i.*  
*p. 151—155, passim.*

On all the preceding points is a most elaborate and excellent dis-  
 sertation in *Saurin's Discours Historiques, &c. sur la Bible. Disc. xli.*

Respecting the fertility of the Lot of Judah, exhibited under so  
 much beautiful imagery in the predictions of the dying patriarch,  
 many writers expatiate in the most satisfactory and attractive lan-  
 guage. In *Anc. Univ. Hist.* it is said, “ Judah's lot did exactly an-  
 “ swer this prediction, it was a fertile land, full of vineyards, fruit-  
 “ trees, and noble pasture-ground for cattle. It was in this tribe  
 “ that the valley of Eshcol, or the brook of the Grape, was, a bunch  
 “ of which was brought by two of the spies whom Moses sent to  
 “ search the land, as a specimen of the richness of the soil: here was  
 “ likewise the brook or torrent of that name, along whose banks were  
 “ the most delicious pasture grounds: and some travellers assure us  
 “ that there are still very large grapes to be met with in the valley



“ of Hebron, which may be probably that along which that torrent  
“ runs.”

*Anc. Univ. Hist. b. i. c. 7. p. 488. vol. ii. Dublin edit. of 1745.*

General fertility was the characteristic of Canaan, and some vestiges of it still remain; sufficient to justify the representations of the patriarch on this point, as well respecting Judah, as afterwards respecting Naphtali and Issachar. The travels of Dr. Shaw are very full, and very satisfactory on this subject; and many extracts from them might be made to great advantage, but that the notes to this Lecture are already greatly extended; and that to quotations in support of a fact to which so many and so striking evidences remain, there would be no end. Yet the present appearance of the promised land, which is in many instances rocky and barren, not only destitute of fertility, but apparently hostile to cultivation, has led some sceptical writers to conclude, that the descriptions given of it as a country so abundantly rich and fertile, could be never applicable to the spot. Two answers may be given to this bold assertion. The first, that the country is not so universally barren, but that places remain sufficiently fertile still, to render probable all that has been said in the sacred writings respecting it; and to lead us to conclude that in other cases the whole face of the country has been changed. Dr. Shaw says, that “ the mountains of the country abound with shrubs  
“ and a delicate short grass, both which the cattle are more fond of,  
“ than of such plants as are common to fallow grounds and mea-  
“ dows.” The second answer to this objection is, that, granting the entire change of the general appearance of the country from fertility to barrenness, in this very point consists one grand evidence of the truth and accomplishment of Scripture Prophecy, which while it spake of the richness and fertility of the country at the moment, declared that so barren and so incapable of cultivation should it become, on account of the “ wickedness” of them who “ dwelt therein.”

Dr. Geddes cannot help allowing the exact accomplishment of the whole language of this chapter in the future lot of the tribes: so that he supposes it written subsequent to the partition of the land. As this is a stale objection, as old as Porphyry, relative to other predictions; so easy to make, and so uncandid, unless supported by evidence; I will not tire the patience of the reader by entering into it's



refutation. He may find some satisfactory account of this prophecy, however, in the treatise of Abbé Le Pluche, already referred to; and he will trace in the opinion of Dr. Geddes, the often-convicted arts of scepticism, to endeavour to bring into suspicion the authenticity of that portion of inspiration (be it what it may) which it is utterly unable to refute, or even plausibly to repel.—Such a mode of assault, upon the objections brought against her, Christianity disallows on the part of her champions—and should they attempt it, her principles would all rise in their condemnation, and her friends indignantly exclaim “*non tali auxilio!*”



## LECTURE V.

THE CHARACTER AND PROPHECIES OF  
BALAAM.

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 NUMB. XXIII. 7—10, AND 18—24.

*And he took up his parable, and said—Balak the King of Moab hath brought me from Aram, out of the mountains of the East, saying, Come, curse me Jacob, and come, defy Israel. How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed? or how shall I defy whom the Lord hath not defied? For from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him: lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations. Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his! —And he took up his parable, and said, Rise up, Balak, and hear, hearken unto me, thou son of Zippor. God is not a man, that he should lie, neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? Behold, I have received commandment to bless, and he hath blessed, and I cannot reverse it. He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel: the Lord his*



*God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them. God brought them out of Egypt; he hath as it were the strength of an unicorn. Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel: according to this time it shall be said, What hath God wrought! Behold the people shall rise up as a great lion, and lift up himself as a young lion: he shall not lie down, until he eat of the prey, and drink the blood of the slain.*

**T**RANSPORTED to the bosom of former ages, we converse with men upon whose ashes we trample; and we receive in tranquillity, useful information which they dearly purchased from experience. Looking into the world, we see only the ravages of time. Here and there, a mouldering heap, a crumbling pillar, a shattered mausoleum, covers the turf which pillows the head of a patriarch, marks the spot where Rachel lies, or distinguishes the repository of a monarch's dust. But when we consult sacred history, from these dry bones, what a vast army springs up! The grave resigns it's captives; these dead men live; and while we contemplate their actions, we are made acquainted with their character. Not only the righteous are held in everlasting remembrance, but upon those pages which time cannot obliterate, the profane are condemned to perpetual notoriety, and the vici-



ous are transmitted through all generations, objects of disgust, contempt, and aversion. Happy had it been for their memory, had their names been struck from those annals of fame, in which so many covet to stand : and still more happy for themselves, could those actions which excite the just abhorrence of posterity, be blotted out of the records of heaven, and erased from the book of God's remembrance. But as it respects their eternal destiny the decree is passed ; and it was necessary, for the instruction and admonition of the world, that the same pages which exhibit the attractions of faith and of purity, in the examples of an Enoch, an Abraham, and a Daniel, should discover the deformity of malice, of avarice, and of unrighteousness, in the character of a Cain, a Laban, and a Balaam.

Time drops a veil, as he passes, over men and things. In proportion as nations or individuals are removed from us, the cloud thickens upon their history. The sacred writers have rescued some personages from utter oblivion : but they reveal only so much of their character, of their family, or of their life, as stands immediately connected with the purposes of the narrative, and is essentially necessary to our instruction. The father of Balaam is known to us only by name. Balaam himself would have lived and died unknown ; the soothsayer and his arts had perish-



ed with the wreck of former years; but that his depravity raised him to reproachful notice, and fixed upon his character the stain of eternal ignominy. His country was Mesopotamia: or, as it is here called, Aram; and his residence Pethor, rising on the banks of the Euphrates. Among the “mountains of the East” and adjacent plains *astronomy* was early cultivated; and the serenity of the atmosphere was peculiarly favourable to the prosecution of this sublime science. Talents are often prostituted; learning is frequently abused; and in connection with laudable pursuits not uncommonly is found the vain desire of exceeding the limits which God has prescribed to human researches. Beyond a certain point curiosity becomes criminal; and inquiry is presumption. Superstition also occasionally encroaches upon the province of esteem for high talent: and credulity is the victim of unprincipled cunning. Literature is degraded by the pretensions of ignorance and of artifice, which are often found blended, and which strive to force themselves into an unnatural alliance with her. From the pure and exalted principles of astronomy in the hands of artful men, an occasion was found to invent the absurd system of *astrology*; or the profession of reading futurity in the face of the heavens from the configurations of the planets, and of fore-



telling the fates of nations or of individuals by nice and curious calculations. These “star-gazers” have been sufficiently exposed in the prophecies of Isaiah; and more enlightened ages have held them in merited derision. But at the time in which Balaam lived it was an easy method of extorting wealth; because credulity assigned to this profession, more extensive researches, than to real science: and while the pretension was unworthy the talents, it well accorded with the character of Balaam. Possessed of extraordinary powers, a cultivated understanding, and exalted sentiments, he sacrificed all that was great, and noble, and good, at the shrine of mammon; and while he pronounced the eulogy, and desired the death, of the righteous, he consented to live a life of impiety, and “received the wages of unrighteousness.” A man so corrupted by the inordinate love of money, so degraded in principle by this vile passion, would not scruple to impose upon others, and to avail himself of their weakness to promote his own interest; especially as it will be seen hereafter, that ambition shared the spoil with avarice, and that honours were occasionally connected with rewards.

He was then a soothsayer—and his dexterity, united with unquestionable ability, diffused universally his reputation, and finally attracted the



serious notice of Balak, King of Moab. At the period to which we refer, Israel was encamped upon the borders of this monarch's territories. The renown of this people had scattered terror and astonishment on every side: the miracles wrought in their favour were well-known and well-authenticated: their armies were formidable both for force and for number; and they covered the face of the country. The presence of God, in proportion as it inspired their troops with courage, blasted the energies of their adversaries. The iniquity of the Canaanites was now full. The balance, suspended for ages over their head, now rolled upon its axis, and shewed that they were weighed and found wanting. While the strength of these nations melted before the descendants of Abraham, the Princes of Moab and of Midian beheld the impending danger, were involved in the common calamity, participated the universal terror, and were "sore afraid of the people." In this extremity, Balak recollected the renowned oracle of Mesopotamia. Enslaved by the superstition of the age, and sensible of his physical inability to contend with his enemies, he imagined that the power which could not be resisted by human prowess, might perhaps wither under the influence of Balaam's enchantments.

A joint embassy is dispatched to Pethor, with



suitable rewards : and the urgency of the case is stated to the crafty diviner ; with liberal promises of future recompense and distinction. The message of these princes was equally calculated to gratify his avarice and to flatter his vanity. To the profusion of wealth, were added the allurements of praise ; and while the money glittered in his sight, his ear drank the soothing voice of adulation, “ I know that he whom thou blest, is blessed ; and he whom thou cursest, is “ cursed.” What heart could safely parley with such powerful besiegers ? and what bosom so feebly fortified against their combined assault as that of Balaam ?

But he must maintain the mystery of imposing form : all the pomp of circumstance was employed ; and he refused to give his answer till he had consulted God, upon a subject respecting which his mind was already made up. The air of secrecy which he assumed, when he affected amidst the shadows of the night to inquire the divine mind, was eminently calculated to impress their superstitious imagination with awe and veneration. Mysterious appearances have been alike successfully employed, to strengthen the dominion of ignorance and credulity, by heathen and papal contrivance. Under the former ages of darkness in the pagan world, the system of idolatry was supported by mysteries



which the common people were not allowed to penetrate; and the same powerful engine defended the absurdities of a church, whose fundamental maxim it was, that “ignorance is the mother of devotion.” Truth never shrinks from examination—falsehood always: truth never can lose by trial—but falsehood cannot be brought to the test of reason and escape detection. In both cases, when these concealments were disclosed, when the dark recesses of hypocrisy were laid open to the day, priestcraft fell to the ground, the loveliness of pure religion was acknowledged, Christianity triumphed, Superstition “fled murmuring, and with her fled the shades of night.” Balaam was too crafty to neglect so powerful a weapon; and having dismissed his noble visitors to rest, with the pretension of asking the permission of God, he left the intimation to produce its full effect upon their mind in secret, and himself retired to repose.—To repose, as he thought: for it does not appear from the history, that he either consulted God, or had any such intention.

It is night. The sun enlightens another hemisphere. The moon leads forth the hosts of heaven: her beams tremble on the water; and her testimony to the power and wisdom of God is given in silence. All nature sleeps. The murmur of merchandise ceases. The noise of



business, and the voice of riot are hushed. The gates of the city are closed. Man has resigned his cares and his pleasures to temporary oblivion: his senses are locked up in repose; and the image of death is impressed on his countenance. All sleep, but the wicked prophet. Avarice permits him not to close his eyes: or if slumber surprise him, it cannot sooth him into forgetfulness. His imagination is at work upon the materials of the day. He sees the princes of Moab again opening their treasures, and pouring them forth at his feet. He is transported to the court of the monarch himself, and receives robes of distinction, and titles of dignity. He grasps the gold which he pursues; and curses the people against whom he is employed. But while his fancy is thus engaged, a voice is heard which chases these visions, which agitates and oppresses him, which raises his hair with terror, and rouses him from his guilty dreams. It is the voice of God: and it addresses him in terms of authority which will admit no subterfuges. "And God said, what men are these with thee?" O wretched man, thine enemy hath found thee! and he asks not for information, but to condemn thee out of thine own mouth! Unable to deceive, he is compelled to declare all, and the truth is circumstantially related. That which he pretended to the embassy of



Moab and Midian to seek, he finds unsought and undesired. The will of God is announced to him, in a positive prohibition—"thou shalt *not* go!"—This sentence disperses all his anticipations of distinction, and all his hopes of gain.

We may easily imagine with what feelings he would pass the remainder of the night. After such a visit darkness and solitude would be terrible to him: repose was impossible; and he would wish with impatience to see the "eyelids of the morning" unclosed. But the first ray of light that appeared would renew his anguish; and the necessity of announcing his disappointment cover him with confusion. So soon as it was day he dismissed the messengers to bear an account of the divine prohibition to their master. As they only said to the King, "Balaam refused to come with us," it was natural that he should conclude from the complexion of the inchanter's character, that he did not think the proposals of Balak sufficiently liberal. Under this impression a second embassy was dispatched, composed of persons yet more noble, with a message couched in terms still more urgent, and with an unlimited prospect of recompense. He was solicited to name his own conditions; and the king said by his messengers, "I will do *whatsoever* thou sayest unto me."



Flattering terms!—but the recollection of the night-vision still haunts the conscience of Balaam. For a moment, a purer principle than that which was the grand spring of his usual operations, acquires the ascendancy: and he said, “If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God, to do less or more.” Happy had it been for him if this principle had continued to prevail: if his intercourse with the enemies of God had here ceased; and if the love of money had perished under the conviction of his allegiance to his Maker. But the impression was momentary. The balance had all along leaned on the side of the world; the finger of God touched it, and the scale preponderated for the instant in favour of heaven: but no sooner was the propelling force withdrawn, than the beam turned, and it fell back to its original declination. Well has it been said, “the *love* of money is the root of all evil.” Every law is broken, every duty neglected, every sacred obligation violated, to gratify its insatiable cravings. Other vices are temporary—the strongest passions, are controuled, subdued, and destroyed by time. Other sins are limited to certain seasons of life, and frequently lose their force and influence as the man grows older. The fire which consumes the young, has a boundary placed to



it's raging, and is extinguished by age. Follies become corrected by experience ; and wisdom is taught by the " multitude of days." But avarice cleaves closer to the heart as years advance : it's influence is increased by time : it lives amid the snows of life, when every emotion besides itself is frozen ; and it quickens the pulsations of a heart dead to every other passion. The canker that devoured the strength of the youth, and chased the bloom of his cheek, eats into the tranquillity of age, and adds wrinkles of care to the traces drawn upon the countenance by the hand of time.

Again the heart of Balaam gives way ; and he tampers with temptation till it destroys him. The positive prohibition which he had received is neglected ; and he vainly hopes a repeal of the divine commandment. Night returns : the sun is faithful to his going down ; and the very advances of the evening ought to have been a check to " the madness of the prophet." Deaf as he was to the still voice of nature, declaring the divine immutability ! Could he hope a revolution in HIS purpose who gives the day and the night in remembrance of a promise once pronounced ? But avarice appears in this instance to have veiled even his understanding. A second visit from God, however, grants him permission to go ! But, what a permission ! the prohibition was an act of friendship : the permission is an act



of indignation. The prohibition was evidently conducive to his safety: the permission is as evidently given him at his peril. It resembles the ease allowed to Ephraim—"He is joined to idols, *let him alone.*" Balaam is found perverse, and he is given over to his own heart's lusts. The spirit of the language is—"Go—and take the consequences: but although you carry your point here—I will yet be obeyed—"the word "which I shall say unto thee, that shalt thou do." Chasten me, O God, according to thy wisdom; controul my passions, and refuse my desires, whenever they displease thee, and in whatever way shall seem good in thy sight—but never curse me with such a permission, nor resign me to the dominion of my own devises!

Behold him eager to set out on this perilous journey. He rises early in the morning; and exhibits an alacrity seldom manifested by those who profess to obey nobler principles. The princes of Moab advance before him to apprise the king of the success of their mission, and to prepare the court for his approach. Balaam is left to pursue his way unattended, except by his two servants—is left to solitude and meditation. I do not envy him his situation. Retirement is desirable only when a man is in alliance with heaven, and at peace with his own conscience. He could not be so absorbed in the anticipation of future distinction, as altogether to blot the



past from his recollection; or to forget the slender permission on which he was pursuing a journey avowedly hostile to the purpose and the pleasure of God. Before he finally seals his decision and sells his hopes of heaven for the present evil world, mercy affords him one more warning. The angel of the Lord withstood him in the way: the eyes of the prophet were holden that he should not see him; and the dull beast upon which he rode was made the organ of reproof to her intelligent master. Three times the animal turned aside; and goaded on by repeated strokes of violence, twice the celestial messenger gave way before him. At length the tongue of the brute was loosed; and the eyes of Balaam were opened.

It is certainly proper to pause one moment to consider this very singular piece of history. A variety of interpretations have been offered with a view to explain the event without supposing a miracle: and some have imagined it to have been a transaction altogether visionary. It appears to me, that this circumstance is to be received as a fact, or relinquished altogether. In the history of Moses, there is nothing upon which the hypothesis of a vision can be founded with any degree of plausibility: and should any doubt remain whether it should be regarded as literally taking place, I think it must yield to



the express testimony of Peter; who says, that “the dumb ass, speaking with man’s voice, forbade the madness of the prophet.” It will not be denied, that he who made man’s mouth, was equal to the performance ascribed to him; and that he could cause the organs of a dumb brute to articulate. It does not appear less credible than a variety of miracles distinctly affirmed and largely supported in the Scriptures. It is not for a finite capacity to arraign the actions, to fathom the purposes, or to perceive the designs, of an infinite, independent, omnipotent agent: nor does it become us to limit the one, or to judge the other. The question to night simply is, whether we will receive the miracle as a plain matter of fact, upon the testimony of the Scriptures? or whether we will reject it without the slightest possible power, or evidence from any quarter, to disprove it?—and even when the most rigid sceptic must allow it to be possible? Take into the account that the largest proportion of Scripture history, and of this very part of Scripture history, is supported by irresistible evidences; evidences resulting from internal excellence, and from external confirmation. Neither is this very fact altogether without it’s parallel in heathen writings; the fables of which probably originated in some vague tradition of this event. Human feelings, and a human voice are ascribed to animals in more in-



stances than one \*. Saurin has supposed, with great probability, that the difficulty consists in the *conciseness* of the narrative, and that there were circumstances, which, if known to us, would meet the objection.

After being again reprov'd for his obstinacy and wickedness; again told that his way is perverse before God; and again admonished strictly to adhere to the word of prophecy which should be delivered to him—he is permitted to pursue his own plan, and to proceed on his journey.

As the character of Balaam may be gathered from the history which has passed before you, we shall not notice the meeting between the king of Moab, and the guest whom he coveted, but shall lead you to him on the top of the mountain from which, after one night's repose, he saw the tents of Israel with sorrow and with envy. The ceremony of rearing seven altars, and the external pomp of religion, we may consider as designed more to excite reverence towards himself, than to honour God: they resemble the retirement which he affected, under the pretence of seeking the mind of Deity,

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\* The Ass of Silenus: the ram of Phryxus: the bull of Europa: the lamb in Egypt in the reign of Boccharis: the elephant of Porus: the horses of Achilles and Adrastus. See *Anc. Univ. Hist.* vol. ii. b. i. c. 3. note 1. Saurin's *Discours*, tom. 1. Disc. LXIV. p. 509, &c. Also note 1, at the end.



when the first messengers of Balak came to Mesopotamia; and it even appears after all that passed, (enough one should have imagined to have daunted the strongest courage,) that he ventured to practise his wretched arts upon this awful occasion, and to “seek for enchantments.” The whole that we have contemplated presents a mortifying picture of human nature, unrenewed, even when adorned with the most illustrious talents. We turn with disgust from a character in which we see only the most exalted powers debased to the vilest purposes, to listen to the burst of eloquence, read at the commencement of this service, and which fell from lips that could “charm so wisely.”

Behold him, then, retiring to a solitary place to receive a command which he dared not to disobey, but which he had reason to believe must defeat his projects. “And God met him.” The welfare of Israel, and not the altars of Balaam, attracted his regard. Without deigning to notice the last, he secures the former, and makes the mortified prophet the instrument of announcing it. The tongue of the ass was not more completely under the controul of God than the tongue of Balaam: and while his heart was full of cursing and bitterness, his lips scattered only blessings and privileges. “And he took up his parable, and said—Balak the king of



“ Moab hath brought me from Aram, out of  
“ the mountains of the East, saying, Come,  
“ curse me Jacob, and come, defy Israel. How  
“ shall I curse whom God hath not cursed? or  
“ how shall I defy whom the Lord hath not  
“ defied? For from the top of the rocks I see  
“ him, and from the hills I behold him: lo, the  
“ people shall dwell alone, and shall not be  
“ reckoned among the nations. Who can  
“ count the dust of Jacob, and the number of  
“ the fourth part of Israel? Let me die the  
“ death of the righteous; and let my last end  
“ be like his!”

There are four leading points in this impressive language. The security—the separation—and the increase of Israel—connected with a desire of personal interest in their privileges.

1. Their security is asserted, “ *How shall I  
“ curse whom God hath not cursed? or how shall  
“ I defy whom the Lord hath not defied?*” This indirect mode of speaking, is nevertheless an absolute declaration in their favour—God hath *not* cursed—God hath *not* defied: and the inference was established by facts—that the imprecations and the efforts of their most powerful adversaries were nugatory. Moab cursed and defied without effect. Midian united with Moab, but it was still in vain. Recourse was then had to other arts and to other agents; and



Balaam was allured from his retreat among "the mountains of the east:" but when he arrived he could do nothing. Balak said—"Curse"—A greater than Balak said, 'Thou shalt not curse!' The power that secured the interests of Israel, surrounds the church of God to this hour, and maintains the Christian life unhurt amid ten thousand ills perpetually rising. The same voice that over-ruled the purposes of the soothsayer, encourages the meanest disciple, and says—"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that riseth in judgment against thee, thou shalt condemn."

2. Their separation from all the world is foretold. "*Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations.*" A more extraordinary prophecy has never been delivered; and a more complete accomplishment of any prediction could not be desired, than that which is furnished, relative to this, every day. While they were an empire, they were separated from the whole world, by their laws, by their customs, and by their religion. Living in the "centre of the three continents that were anciently inhabited\*," they had little intercourse with the nations by whom they were surrounded, and less assimilation to their man-

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\* Le Pluche. See Note 2, at the end.



ners. And since their dispersion over the whole earth, for their rejection of the Messiah, their distinction has been preserved; and while the fulfilment of the prophecy has been no less complete, it is still more miraculous than when they were collected. It is thus also that the church of God is preserved, although scattered to the east, the west, the north, and the south. Thus the Christian is required to be separated from an ungodly world. Thus Revelation lives uninjured by every attack. The lamp is placed on the top of the mountain, and neither the damps of time can impair it's lustre, nor the blasts of persecution extinguish it's glory: it throws it's trembling light around, and the powers of darkness, who hate it's beams, cannot hide them, because the hand that kindled, perpetuates it's flame.

3. Their increase is predicted. "*Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel?*" The promise of God to Abraham was—"I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand upon the sea-shore, and they shall possess the gate of their enemies." This blessing, after the lapse of many years, was re-echoed and confirmed by Balaam. In the days of Solomon, the meridian of their prosperity as a nation, the prediction was amply verified. And to this hour, reduced



as they are in point of external dignity, they are a numerous, as well as a separated people. Thus is it also with the spiritual children of Abraham's Son and Lord. We can form no just calculation of their increase and multitude. The grave hides the larger proportion of them. Those that are alive and remain, lie at all points of the compass. But in the day of their general assembly, they shall prove "a great multitude which no man can number gathered out of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues." Israel, and the Gentiles admitted to Israel's privileges, shall meet in the same world; and "there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." The envious eye of Balaam again shall see, and again shall curse, them: he shall suffer the evil that he preferred, and languish for ever without the good that he despised.

4. He desired a personal interest in their privileges. A tribute to their felicity is extorted from the reluctant lips of this wicked man. "*Let me die the death of the righteous; and let my last end be like his.*" An end is acknowledged; and the prospect of it mars all his hopes, disturbs all his feelings, destroys all his dreams. For once conscience speaks out. The visions of futurity fill him with terror. He sees the sunshine of peace resting upon the "*last end*" of the "righteous;" and his own dying moments



rise before him covered with all the agony of remorse. Their death, not their life, attracted his desires: and rather than relinquish the follies of time, he dared the punishments of eternity. Sad picture of the fatal resolution of thousands! They acknowledge the loveliness of piety, they trace it's efficacy, they envy the believer's triumph over the last adversary, they feel that they have no consolation to alleviate the bitterness of death, they form the wish and pronounce the prayer of Balaam: but like him continue to cleave to the world, like him they admire but do not imitate, like him they struggle to silence the clamours of conscience, like him they sow vanity, and like him they shall reap despair.

We pass on to the second parable of this singular and distinguished character, the features of which exactly correspond with that which ushers in his eloquent predictions. This is also expressed in the same general terms, and relates to the same subject—Israel's prosperity. We shall not attempt to reduce his observations to system, nor to impose upon them arrangement: but shall pass over them as they are presented to us.

Ver. 18. "*And he took up his parable, and said, Rise up, Balak, and hear; and hearken unto me, thou son of Zippor.*" What an address to



a monarch! When the Spirit of God is upon a man, all earthly distinctions fall to the ground. The time-serving Balaam, who could crouch for his interest, and could lick the dust before the foot of pride to gain a handful of wealth, would have been the last to trample upon human distinctions of his own will: but he is Balaam no longer—his tongue, his language, his actions, are all under the controul of a superior power; and he speaks unwelcome truths, not because he chooses, but because he *must* speak them. He calls upon the proud man from whom he expects his promotion to rise and receive his message; he does not give him the evanescent titles of worldly majesty, but addresses him as a man; and instead of bowing at his feet, speaks in the high tone of a Superior, because God speaks by him. And the reverence inculcated upon the king of Moab, surely befits the worshipping members of Christian assemblies. When Ehud said to Eglon, one of Balak's predecessors, "I have a message from God unto thee," the heathen monarch rose from his seat—and in similar circumstances, professing societies and individuals have received communications from the same exalted Being with comparative indifference. Attend to his words.

Ver. 19. *"God is not a man that he should lie, nor the son of man that he should repent:*



*“hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he  
“spoken, and shall he not make it good?”* Nor  
is he singular in this delineation of the Divine  
character. The same representation is made,  
and the same truths are preached, by the vivid  
and transient colours of the bow of the storm.  
When the cloud rolls by, sprinkling the earth  
with showers, without rending it's bosom and  
whelming with destruction the track over which  
it passes—it is in obedience to a covenant made  
and recorded early in the annals of time, that the  
waters should no more go over the earth to de-  
stroy it; and it's testimony is *“God is not a  
“man that he should lie, neither the son of  
“man that he should repent.”* When the sea  
rushes upon the shore and threatens to swallow  
it up, it stays it's billows and curbs it's raging  
at a certain point: because he who poured it  
from the hollow of his hand has appointed it's  
boundaries and has said, *“Hitherto shalt thou  
“come but no further—and here shall thy  
“proud waves be stayed;”* and he is *“not a  
“man that he should lie, neither the son of  
“man that he should repent.”*—The return of  
times and of seasons, of months and of years, is  
regulated by an ancient decree, *“So long as  
“the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest,  
“and cold and heat, and summer and winter,  
“and day and night shall not cease.”* Im-



pressed by this prevailing and permanent law, the sun knoweth his going down, the moon her wane and her increase, the seasons their respective order. No one infringes the dominion of the other; or passes over his own determined limit. But these declare in the midst of their vicissitudes—"God is not a man that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should repent." This immutability of God is finely contrasted with human instability. A "man" may "lie"—the "son of man" does "repent"—an "arm of flesh" will fail. He is frequently a compound of weakness and of wickedness. He speaks to deceive; and his heart derides what his tongue utters. He sacrifices truth to fashion, to convenience, to vain-glory. Perhaps he purposes at the time of his avowal what he promises: but he is "unstable as water." Some whim obliterates the recollection of his engagement: some after-thought changes his purpose: some intervening circumstance obstructs his design; and the man that confides in his word is the victim of delusion. His best, his most sincere, his most benevolent wishes and intentions may fail for want of power. He possesses not the influence which he presumed that he held; or he falls from the greatness which he enjoyed; or he is arrested by the hand of death before his plans are accomplished. "Put not



“ your trust in princes, nor in the son of man,  
 “ in whom there is no help.”

‘ Lean not on earth, ’twill pierce thee to the heart,  
 ‘ A broken reed at best—but oft a spear !  
 ‘ On it’s sharp point, peace bleeds, and hope expires !”

But “ God is not a man that he should lie,  
 “ neither the son of man that he should repent:  
 “ hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath  
 “ he spoken, and shall he not make it good?”  
 His immutability is essential to his nature, and  
 may alike be traced through his purposes, his  
 promises, and his operations.

Ver. 20. “ *Behold I have received commandment*  
 “ *to bless; and he hath blessed; and I cannot re-*  
 “ *verse it.*” Thus far we had seen nothing in the  
 language of Balaam to betray the enmity of his  
 heart against God : but here it rises to observa-  
 tion, and manifests itself, as in almost every in-  
 stance in which it is seen at all, against his  
 cause and people. “ *I cannot reverse it*”—O  
 mortification to his wishes ! he clearly implies  
 his intentions and expresses their defeat. “ *I can-*  
 “ *not reverse it*”—O triumph to Israel ! neither  
 human nor infernal power can prevail against  
 those purposes of mercy which heaven maintains  
 for it’s children. “ Surely,” O God, “ the wrath  
 “ of man shall praise thee; and the remainder  
 “ of that wrath, thou wilt restrain!”



Ver. 21. “*He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel; the Lord his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them.*” Was there then no iniquity in Jacob? and no perverseness in Israel? He that reads their history will find much of the former, and little besides the latter. Their journeyings from Egypt to the very point at which they were then arrived, had been distinguished by miracles, and yet disgraced by murmuring, and by unbelief, and by idolatry. But he covered their guilt, and forgave their transgressions. And thus, “God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses to them.” “He made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” “He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel.”

○ The divine presence accompanied them: “the Lord his God is with him.” And how much is included in this sentence! *Constant vigilance.* “He that keepeth Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.” *Constant protection.* “He will not suffer thy foot to be moved.” *Constant direction.* The pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night, the visible symbol of God’s presence, always accompanied them: it marked their course, limited the extent of every jour-



ney, determined their resting-place, and prescribed the periods of their movements and of their repose. "He led them by the right way  
"to a city of habitation." *Constant supplies.* He "gave them of the corn of heaven; man  
"did eat angel's food; and he sent them meat  
"to the full." During their forty years pilgrimage, their "raiment waxed not old upon  
"them."

This presence is accompanied by tokens of majesty—"the shout of a king is among them." The visits of God were awful to Abraham, to Jacob, and to Eliphaz. What then must be his perpetual presence? This constitutes the solemn, substantial felicity of heaven. And wherever it is now bestowed, it is powerfully felt. The fear of Jacob fell upon the inhabitants of the land where he sojourned. The house of Obadedom prospered while the ark of God tarried with him. The nations melted before Israel. All these impressions are to be traced to the same source—the presence of God; and they are the footsteps of his majesty.

Ver. 22. "*God brought them out of Egypt; he  
"hath as it were the strength of an unicorn."*

Had it been left to the choice of Balaam, he would gladly have drawn a veil over this part of their history: for the inference which Balak must draw from the fall of Pharoah, would be



most distressing. “God brought them out of “Egypt.”—This fact was the subject of a clear prediction; which received a full accomplishment in the event. “He brought them forth “with a strong hand”—and the monuments of power and indignation which he left behind, perpetuated the remembrance of this singular interposition on behalf of the descendants of Abraham. The same power still encircled them: for it is added, “He *hath* as it were the strength “of an unicorn.” By this term most naturalists understand the Rhinoceros, an animal of prodigious force. God does not leave any work incomplete. He did not deliver Israel from Egypt, to desert them in the wilderness; and the issue of their wanderings may serve to point the Christian to the end of his faith: “being confident of this very thing, that he which hath “begun a good work in us, will carry it on till “the day of Jesus Christ.”

Ver. 23. “*Surely there is no enchantment against “Jacob, neither is there any divination against “Israel: according to this time it shall be said of “Jacob, and of Israel, what hath God wrought?”*

It is pleasant to hear extorted from the mouths of the adversaries of God, a confession of their impotence, amid the plenitude of their malice. It is the more pleasing, because such confessions are not limited to any particular point, or con-

their course, limited the extent of every jour-



finer to any particular person, but relate to every individual and to every cause which God condescends to take under his protection. A Christian may be alarmed at the number and discipline of the armies that dispute his advancement towards heaven : but greater is He that is for him, than they that are against him. The mountains shall be levelled and the vallies exalted as he presses on. The arts of man, and the more pernicious wiles of Satan, shall be blasted by the thunder of his eternal Guardian. Balaam gathers this conclusion, so foreign to his wishes, not only from the inspiration of God, but from a retrospection of “ what God “ had wrought.” Such a retrospect on the part of every pious character, would frequently remove the unfounded apprehensions which sometimes invade and distress the mind ; and could not fail to put a song of gratitude into the mouth. Such a review must now of necessity be partial and circumscribed—of many parts of the divine plans respecting ourselves we remain ignorant : many mercies we overlook ; many interpositions we forget ; but when from the summit of yonder hills of light we look back upon the way by which we have been led, we shall join the shout of triumph raised by redeemed nations, and say—“ What hath God “ wrought !”



Ver. 24. “ *Behold the people shall rise up as a great lion, and lift up himself as a young lion : he shall not lie down till he eat of the prey, and drink the blood of the slain.*” These beautiful and highly-figurative expressions need no explanation, and admit of no comment. In language which cannot be misunderstood, and which it would be injury to alter, they speak of the victories, the power, and the glory of Israel. Their conquests in Canaan, and their triumphs before they reached that country, over the nations that disputed and obstructed their passage, sufficiently establish the prediction. While so many instances of their success are present to every recollection, enlargement is unnecessary : and while the accomplishment of the prophecy is so completely exhibited in their general history, it were futile to descend to the enumeration of particulars. I only detain you to contrast with these representations, authenticated beyond all doubt, in the former periods of time, by the prosperity of Abraham’s descendants, their present desolate and affecting situation : and we shall leave the remaining predictions of Balaam to a future discussion. Are the wanderers, who meet us in every quarter of the globe with the features of foreigners whatever be the climate—who have not an empire, nor a home, nor a temple, nor a resting-place—are



these the people of whom such distinguished blessings were foretold, and by whom they were actually enjoyed? But the glory is departed; and their Rock hath given them up—given them up, for a season, to the punishment of their iniquities, but not for ever. “O Jerusalem, “Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and “slayest them that are sent unto thee: how “often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens “under her wings—and ye would not! Behold “your house is left unto you desolate! Hence- “forth ye shall not see me, till ye say, ‘Blessed “ ‘is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!’”



## NOTES.

### NOTES TO THE FIFTH LECTURE.

#### NOTE I.

RESPECTING the speaking of Balaam's ass, in the preceding Lecture it was said not to be without it's counterpart in the heathen world. That the heathens sometimes imputed to their animals human feeling, and had a tradition that on some extraordinary occasions they had been known to speak, is evident from Homer. He represents the horses of Achilles lamenting the death of their master's friend, Patroclus.

Ἴπποι δ' Αἰακίδαο, μάχης ἀπάνευθεν ἑόντες,  
Κλαῖον, ἐπειδὴ πρῶτα πυθέσθην ἡνιόχοιο  
Ἐν κόνιῃσι πεσόντος ὑφ' Ἐκτορος ἀνδροφόνου.  
Ἡ μὰν Αὐτομέδων, Διώρεος ἄλκιμος υἱός,  
Πολλὰ μὲν ἄρ' μάστιγι θοῇ ἐπεμαίετο θείνων,  
Πολλὰ δὲ μειλιχίοισι προσηύδα, πολλὰ δ' ἄρειῃ·  
Τὼ δ' ἔτ' ἄψ' ἐπὶ νῆας ἐπὶ πλατὺν Ἑλλήσποντον  
Ἡθελέτην ἰέναι, ἔτ' ἐς πόλεμον μετ' Ἀχαιῆς·  
Ἀλλ' ὥς τε γῆλη μένει ἔμπεδον, ἥτ' ἐπὶ τύμβῳ  
Ἀνέρος εἰσλήκει τεθνηότος, ἥε γυναικὸς·  
Ὡς μένον ἀσφαλέως περικαλλέα δίφρον ἔχοντες  
Οὐδὲι ἐνισκήψαντε καρῆατα· δάκρυα δὲ σφιν  
Θερμὰ κατὰ βλεφάρων χαμάδις ῥέε μυρομένοισιν,  
Ἡνιόχοιο πόθῳ· θαλερὴ δὲ μιαίνετο χαίτη,  
Ζεύγλης ἐξεριπῆσα παρὰ ζυγὸν ἀμφοτέροισι.

*Hom. Il. lib. xvii. v. 426, &c. tom. ii. Foulis edit.*

Mean-time at distance from the scene of blood,  
The pensive steeds of great Achilles stood ;



Their god-like master slain before their eyes,  
 They wept and shar'd in human miseries.  
 In vain Automedon now shakes the rein,  
 Now plies the lash, and sooths and threats in vain;  
 Nor to the fight, nor Hellespont, they go,  
 Restive they stood, and obstinate in woe;  
 Still as a tomb-stone, never to be mov'd,  
 On some good man, or woman unreprov'd,  
 Lays it's eternal weight; or fix'd as stands  
 A marble courser by the sculptor's hands,  
 Plac'd on the hero's grave. Along their face,  
 The big round drops cours'd down with silent pace,  
 Conglobing on the dust. Their manes, that late  
 Circled their arched necks, and wav'd in state,  
 Trail'd on the dust beneath the yoke were spread,  
 And prone to earth was hung their languid head.

*Pope's Hom. Il. b. xvii. v. 484, &c. vol iii.*

His horse speaks when Achilles reproaches him with the death of Patroclus.

Τὸν δ' ἄρ' ὑπὸ ζυγόφιν προσέφη πόδας αἰόλος ἵππος  
 Ξάνθος, ἄφαρ δ' ἤμυσε καρήατι, πᾶσα δὲ χαίτη,  
 Ζεύγλης ἐξεριπῦσα παρὰ ζυγὸν, ἔδας ἱκανὲν  
 Αὐδήεντα δέθηκε θεὰ λευκώλενος Ἥρη.

*Hom. Il. tom. ii. lib. xix. v. 405, &c. Foul. edit.*

The generous Xanthus, as the words he said,  
 Seem'd sensible of woe, and droop'd his head,  
 Trembling he stood before the golden wain,  
 And bow'd to dust the honours of his mane.  
 When, strange to tell! (so Juno will'd) he broke  
 Eternal silence, and portentous spoke.

*Pope's Hom. Il. b. xix. vol. iv. l. 446, &c.*

Then follows a prediction uttered by the horse relative to the death of his master Achilles. Homer takes care to inform us that (as we may suppose this the first time he ever spoke, so) he never spoke again.



Ὡς ἀγα φωνήσαντος Εἰρινύες ἔσχεθον αὐδῆν. *V. 419.*

Then ceas'd for ever, by the Furies ty'd,  
His fateful voice— *l. 464, &c.*

Bishop Newton has very justly stated the application to be made of these and similar traditions in the heathen world. “The proper use of citing such authorities is not to prove, that those instances and this of Balaam are upon an equal footing, and equally true; but only to prove, that the Gentiles believed such things to be true, and to lie within the power of their gods, and consequently could not object to the truth of scripture history on this account.” And he founds this argument not merely upon this tradition by Homer, but upon the testimony of “the gravest historians, such as Livy, and Plutarch, who frequently affirm that oxen have spoken.” Saurin makes the same use of the same traditions, and reasons upon them in a corresponding strain. But I cannot withhold from you six principles upon which he illustrates the mission and employment of Balaam.

1. “Notwithstanding that the descendants of Abraham did form, some ages after that patriarch, the only nation that God owned, and to whom he committed his oracles, there were other worshippers of the true God throughout the world before the conquest of the promised land.” He instances Job and his friends, Jethro and his family, &c.

2. “The worship of God was frequently mixed with superstition and idolatry, even among them who professed to adore the one God of heaven and earth. The teraphim of Laban prove this.”

3. “This odious mixture did not hinder God from revealing himself to those who practised such a monstrous and motley religion—nay, he sometimes even revealed himself to professed Idolaters: Abimelech and Nebuchadnezzar are instances of this kind of revelation.”

4. “It was an opinion maintained among the Gentiles, that prophets and diviners were able to send plagues among the people”—that “the heathens were wont to devote to perdition those against whom they waged war;” and he quotes, as an evidence, the form of imprecations made on such occasions from Macrobius.

*Saturnal. lib. 3. cap. 9.*



5. "Supernatural gifts in general, and those of prophecy in particular, did indeed enlighten the minds of the prophets, but did not always sanctify their hearts."

6. "The greatest wickednesses, and human weaknesses of the prophets, never went so far as to make them pronounce oracles contrary to what was dictated by the Holy Ghost."

*Saur. Discours, &c. sur la Bible, tome i. Disc. lxiv. p. 506, 507.*

*Folio edit. a la Haye, 1728.*

The application of these principles to the History, the Mission, and the Predictions of Balaam throughout, will throw considerable light upon the subject.

NOTE II. Le Pluche thus reasons respecting the favourable situation of that country to which the oracles of God were committed, for their general dissemination. He says—"The nation, keeper of the archives of mankind, was placed in Palestine on the banks of the River Jordan and along the Mediterranean; that is, in the exact centre of the three continents that were anciently inhabited. The Africans could not go out of Suez, their only passage between the Red Sea and the Mediterranean to enter into Arabia, without making Palestine in their way. The Arabians coming out of their deserts met the river Jordan. When the Europeans were at the end of their longest courses on the Mediterranean, they arrived in Greater Asia, upon the confines of Palestine. The Persians and the Eastern nations could not pass the Euphrates, and visit the provinces of the West and the South, without coming into the countries near Syria and Palestine." Such were the geographical facilities for universal extension presented to religious truth, in respect of the locality of the Jews connected with all other nations. He goes on to discover how circumstances paved the way for it's diffusion. "The place where the depositum remained was accessible to all the universe: but the nation intrusted with it, was not shewed to the rest of the world but with some reserve, and in the proper time. We shall not be long without seeing the reasons that caused it to remain for a great while concealed as it were, and in a state of separation. This Economy lasted to the time when the fulfilling of the promises was near at hand. Then the Jews, already known by several instances of the protection of God, and even dreaded on



“ that account by the Egyptians, the Syrians, and the Babylonians,  
 “ began to have correspondences with other nations. Several Israel-  
 “ itish families were by compulsion dispersed towards the river  
 “ Araxes, along the Thermodoon, and in other places in the north.  
 “ Many Jewish families voluntarily settled in Alexandria and Cy-  
 “ rene, at Damas and Antioch, at Tarsus and Thessalonica, at  
 “ Rome, and a great many other places. Their books translated  
 “ from the Hebrew into the Greek, by degrees spread the know-  
 “ ledge of the promises made to Abraham, the Head of the Jewish  
 “ nation. The East and the West began to publish that the Deli-  
 “ verer and Master of all nations was to come out of that one in par-  
 “ ticular: and this hope was universally divulged—*percrebuerat*  
 “ *rumor*. Tacitus and Suetonius are our authorities for it. It is  
 “ true, they apply that prophecy to Vespasian and Titus, in the  
 “ same manner as Virgil had applied it to one of Livia’s children,  
 “ who was designed to succeed Augustus; but this attribution,  
 “ though arbitrary, and made by interpreters, who for certain were  
 “ very badly informed, yet supposes the expectation of a change in  
 “ the state of mankind, which was to proceed from the Jewish na-  
 “ tion—*ut ex Judæa profecti rerum potirentur.*”

*Abbé Le Pluche’s Truth of the Gospel demonstrated, vol. i.*  
*p. 99—101.*

In the midst of all this---and in defiance of that universal disper-  
 sion which is now made of them among all nations, their distinction is  
 preserved, according to Balaam’s prediction, and the representations  
 made in page 190 of the preceding Lecture, to which this Note  
 refers.



## LECTURE VI.

THE PROPHECIES OF BALAAM CONTINUED  
AND CONCLUDED.

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 NUM. XXIV. 1—9. AND 15—24.

*And when Balaam saw that it pleased the Lord to bless Israel, he went not as at other times to seek for enchantments, but he set his face toward the wilderness. And Balaam lift up his eyes, and he saw Israel abiding in his tents according to their tribes, and the Spirit of God came upon him. And he took up his parable, and said, Balaam the son of Beor hath said, and the man whose eyes are open hath said; he hath said, which heard the words of God, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open: How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel! As the vallies are they spread forth; as gardens by the river's side; as the trees of lign-aloes which the Lord hath planted; and as cedar-trees beside the waters. He shall pour the water out of his buckets, and his seed shall be in many waters, and his king shall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted. God brought him forth*



out of Egypt, he hath as it were the strength of an unicorn: he shall eat up the nations his enemies, and shall break their bones, and pierce them through with his arrows. He couched, he lay down as a lion, and as a great lion: who shall stir him up? Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee! — And he took up his parable, and said, Balaam the son of Beor hath said, and the man whose eyes are open hath said; He hath said, which heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the Most High, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open: I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth. And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies, and Israel shall do valiantly. Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city. And when he looked on Amalek, he took up his parable, and said, Amalek was the first of the nations, but his latter end shall be that he perish for ever. And he looked on the Kenites, and took up his parable, and said, Strong is thy dwelling-place, and thou puttest thy nest in a rock: nevertheless, the Kenite shall be wasted, until Ashur shall carry thee away Captive. And he took up his parable, and said, Alas! who shall live when God doeth this! And ships shall come from the coasts of Chittim, and shall afflict Ashur, and shall afflict Eber, and he also shall perish for ever!



**T**HE gifts and calling of God are without repentance. They sometimes ill accord, as we judge, with the character and the merits of their possessor; and Deity never acts more like a Sovereign than in the choice of instruments to perform his pleasure. When he determined to reveal his will respecting Israel, and to announce his purposes of mercy towards them, he did not to that end raise up an illustrious prophet from the midst of them; neither Moses, nor the seventy Elders upon whom the Spirit of God rested were employed on this occasion: but an unprincipled soothsayer, who had sold his conscience to the love of filthy lucre, is allured from his retreat by the combined attractions of avarice and of ambition, is engaged to withstand the people whom God determined to support, and is compelled out of his own mouth to frustrate the projects of those whom he designed to serve, to destroy his own hopes of distinction, to condemn his own character, and to counteract the most earnest desires of his heart.

Prophecy is beyond controversy, admitting it's existence, the immediate gift of God. It is a gift of no common value and importance. One should have imagined that, in it's communication, it would have been confined to men of



the most distinguished piety, who had the most closely walked with the Divinity, and the most diligently sought his approbation. But who shall limit the Holy One of Israel? We discover this inestimable treasure, this evening, not merely in an earthen vessel, but a vessel self-dedicated to purposes of dishonour. We see it in the possession of a man (and, alas! it is not a solitary instance) who blended the finest talents and the foulest heart that ever met; and whose history is recorded at once to admonish and to humble us. It teaches us many affecting truths; and human life is full of sad confirmations of them. We have met in the world occasionally, as well as in these pages, the destructive union of vice and of intelligence. The character drawn in the connection of this Lecture is calculated to command admiration and to excite disgust: to create tender interest and to force abhorrent indignation. Like Leviathan "he drinketh up "a river at once"—he disdains a rivulet of knowledge, and exhausting it's supplies returns thirsty from the very fountain-head. He ascends the heavens, and explores it's regions—he crosses the deep, and fathoms it's recesses—he searches to the extremities of the earth: nothing is concealed from his scrutiny, nothing is impossible to his powers, nothing satisfies the cravings of his capacious understanding. His



speech is eloquence, the opening of his lips is wisdom, and the tones of his voice all are modulated by powerful persuasion. But what avails this exalted genius when regulated by so impure a disposition? His lips move only to promote deceit, and his heart is wholly set on mischief. Enchantment is upon his tongue, but a pestilence in his breath that poisons the springs of existence. Death floats upon the flattery of his words, and he that listens to them shall not be innocent. *Such was Balaam*; so fascinating and so cruel: music in his voice and venom in his heart; the praise of piety in his mouth, and the hatred of God brooding in his bosom, and pervading all his actions. We are taught as ministers to rejoice with trembling: and while we discover a man enjoying the visions of the Almighty, distinguished by such extraordinary gifts, and favoured with such high converse with God, after all continuing in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity, and perishing in his sins—we have reason to try seriously our own characters, lest after preaching to others, we ourselves should become castaways.

Man possesses the power of hiding from man the secrets of his heart; and we are easily deceived by the plausible professions of the hypocrite. We know of another only just so much as the tongue reveals; and the east is not far-



ther removed from the west, than the heart of man is sometimes distant from his lips. He alone, who made the heart, understands how deeply it has fallen, can unveil its secret *purposes*, and can bring to light its retreating depravity. When we hear some professors talk on religious subjects, we could almost imagine they had been translated into the third heavens, and were pouring out the things which Paul saw and could not utter: or that they had ascended the mount of Transfiguration with Peter, and James, and John, and were detailing the interesting conversation of Moses and Elias with their, and our, Master. How they expatiate on the glory of the cross! How they talk of internal feelings! How they enlarge on Christian experience! We can hardly persuade ourselves that these have learned to speak the language of Zion, while they are in truth aliens and foreigners. When we meet with one of this class, we say "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom *is no guile.*" But what is he *indeed*? In how many affecting instances the reverse of all that he seems! The power of religion is on his tongue; but its influence has failed to reach his heart. He can recommend it in fluent, impressive language; but he is careless whether it be promoted or dishonoured in his life. The Bible has given his real character in one short



sentence: he is “as sounding brass, and a tinkling cymbal.” *Such was Balaam.* Who, in reading the praises which fell from his lips, would not conclude that he was devoutly enamoured with the prosperity of the people of God? Who would not imagine that his heart was with “Israel resting in his tents?” But in fact, he willingly relinquished a participation of the felicity which he extols with so much feeling, and with so strong conviction, for the paltry consideration of such rewards as the king of Moab—a worm like himself—could bestow; and had actually ascended the hill, whence he beheld the favoured nation, with a design to accomplish their ruin.

Some of the most abandoned characters have been made the instruments in the hand of God of promoting the interests of his church. Some have been so occupied unintentionally. Such were Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus. They bowed down their shoulder to bear, without knowing whom they served. Some have understood by whom, and for what end, they were employed: but engaged reluctantly in the work. *Such was Balaam.* His heart revolted from every word that his tongue uttered. Others again, have advanced still further in the Divine service: they have acted under the known commission of God, and that willingly; and yet have not been



holy characters. Such was Jehu; whose zeal was as furious as a blaze of thorns, fanned by the tempest,—and as transient too! Thus the immediate influence of God, may, for a season, counter-balance the depraved disposition of the mind, to carry into effect his own exalted purposes; and to leave the heart unchanged: it is compelled to admire what it cannot love; and dies acknowledging the good, which, alas, it has not the disposition to secure.

Who discover so much perseverance in the pursuit of a favourite object, as worldly characters? They are never weary of labouring for the meat that perisheth: we stretch not forth our hand for that which endureth to eternal life. They never relinquish the effort to amass “riches that make to themselves wings, and flee away as eagles towards heaven”—“treasures upon earth where moth and rust corrupt, and thieves break through and steal:” we bestow no pains to obtain “durable riches and righteousness”—none to secure “treasures that are in heaven.” They compass sea and land to extend their merchandise; we despise the “Pearl of great price.” Their disappointments serve only to redouble their ardour: if they lose their object in one way, they are stimulated by that very loss to pursue it more eagerly in another: but we are terrified by every danger,



shaken by every difficulty, foiled by every adversary, depressed by every discouragement. We are corrected in our lukewarmness by the perseverance of *Balaam* in so bad a cause: his reiterated defeats cannot persuade him to resign the contest; and twice repulsed, he returns again to the attack, altering a little the mode of his assault, but continuing with undiminished resolution to make war upon the purposes of heaven. This infatuated obstinacy terminated, as every contention with God must terminate, in the increased disgrace of the assailant, the enlarged demonstration of his own glory, and the extended advantage of his people.

The Lecture of this night pursues THE PROPHECIES OF BALAAM from the point where the last discussion dropped them, to the close of this unsuccessful enterprise against the counsel and the will of God: and we shall suffer the discourse to form such an arrangement as may arise out of the language to be examined, and as may be dictated by the predictions in their natural order.

V. 1. “ *And when Balaam saw that it pleased the Lord to bless Israel, he went not as at other times to seek for enchantments, but set his face toward the wilderness.*” We are with difficulty persuaded of that, which we do not wish to be true. When the fact which we are re-



quired to believe, coincides with our desires and our expectations, how conclusive its evidences appear, and how irresistible we deem the arguments by which it is supported! Under such circumstances mere possibility strikes us with all the force of demonstration. But if a truth oppose our gratifications, and require us to renounce our favourite pursuits, we admit its claims with reluctance, and are dissatisfied with every species of evidence that can be produced. On this principle we may account for the opposition with which revelation meets from the corrupt heart of man. It is not that the evidences supporting it are deficient, but that those who reject them, *do not wish it to be true*. The establishment of its claims, must be the ruin of their hopes; and urged by the danger of so great an interest, they harden their hearts against conviction. We may trace the operation of this principle in the case of Balaam. The disapprobation of God against his journey had been expressed in so many distinct prohibitions, and his patronage of Israel had been declared in language no less strong than intelligible; yet such is the heart of man, practising deceit upon others, and deceiving itself, that it was not till the *third* attempt to carry his point against the decisions of God, that this



conviction is reluctantly admitted, and “he saw  
“that it pleased the Lord to bless Israel.”

V. 2. “*And Balaam lift up his eyes, and he  
“saw Israel abiding in his tents, according to  
“their tribes, and the Spirit of God came upon  
“him.*” Unwelcome sight to his malignant  
heart! He did not look down as a father looks  
upon his family, collected around his table,  
cheerful and happy. He did not look down as  
Moses beheld the good land, the promised in-  
heritance of the people whom he loved. He  
did not look down, as angels look from the hills  
of light upon our tents reared for a season in  
this wilderness, and as we hope to look upon  
the church upon earth and in heaven, when we  
join the spirits of the just made perfect. But  
he looked as our immortal bard represents the  
great adversary of man, when he beheld the  
bliss of our first parents, and turned aside with  
envy. But however depraved was the character,  
and however vile the intentions of Balaam, his  
words were faithful and true, for “the Spirit  
“of God came upon him,” and he spake under  
His inspiration.

V. 3, and 4. “*And he took up his parable and  
“said, Balaam the son of Beor, hath said, and  
“the man whose eyes are open hath said—he hath  
“said, which heard the words of God, which saw  
“the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance,*



*“but having his eyes open.”*—A singular exordium!--and it introduces also the series of predictions succeeding this parable, with the additional declaration, that he *“knew the knowledge of the Most High.”* I think it is not difficult to see the force and design of these expressions. They doubtless present a claim to superiority of illumination over the common intelligence irradiating the human mind---a claim to direct inspiration. His *“eyes were open”* to discern things not commonly seen, and his mind enlightened to anticipate events not then accomplished. On this account were prophets in old times called *“Seers.”* His eyes were opened also in a miraculous way to objects most tormenting to himself: they were opened to a sense of his guilt, his misery, and his danger; to a conviction of the beauty and the tranquillity of holiness: but his heart was not affected by these opposite *“visions”*—and he persisted in choosing the evil and refusing the good, till he was crushed by his own devices, and consumed in the sparks which he had kindled. Would that he were singular in his distressing situation! But probably in this assembly are some whose eyes have been thus opened to discover what is right, but whose hearts, unchanged by ascertaining the will of God, retain their natural disposition to pursue what is wrong.



Our sins of ignorance are few, in comparison of those which are committed against light, against conscience, against privileges, against conviction. The times of darkness are passed: and this is *now* “the condemnation, that light is “come into the world, but men have loved “darkness rather than light because their deeds “are evil.” The complaint of the spirits in prison—“those unhappy spirits who are reserved in chains of darkness, with fallen angels “against the day of wrath”—cannot impute their ruin to lack of knowledge: but must express their misery in terms of self-reproach, and say—“How have I hated instruction; and my “heart despised reproof.”—It is easy to perceive that Balaam declares himself possessed of divine illumination; and intimates that his words have the authority of God impressed upon them: but it may not be so easy to account for the terms in which he expresses himself on this point. Probably when he calls himself “the “man whose eyes are open”—he may allude to the circumstance of his journey, when they were closed against “the visions of the Almighty,” what time the angel withstood him, and he saw him not. The original rather implies “who had his eyes shut”—and it is inferred by the translators that they are now “open.” His “falling into a trance,” yet “hav-



“ing his eyes open,” alludes, we may conclude, to the mode of communication which God adopted in making him acquainted with his purposes, and which was probably in a vision, as distinguished from a dream; which distinction is well expressed in the language employed: he was absorbed in the scenes passing before him, but was not asleep: he was “in a trance,” but had his “eyes open.”—Now observe his testimony.

V. 5 and 6. “*How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel. As the vallies are they spread forth, as gardens by the river’s side, as the trees of lign-aloes which the Lord hath planted, and as cedar-trees beside the waters.*” We are to consider this beautiful parable as a confirmation of the preceding predictions which have already engaged your attention. Israel’s prosperity is still the subject, and is still expressed in general terms. There is in this prophecy manifestly a recurrence of the same thoughts, and in some instances a repetition of the same language. A beautiful change of imagery is presented, but the same point is held in view; and the sublimity pervading this portion of the Scriptures corresponds with the universal majesty that forms one of their principal characteristics. It is unnecessary that I should again direct your atten-



tion to those parts of the Jewish history which justify these metaphorical representations: but having before detailed their prosperity, it may be more profitable, and at the same time more pleasant to shew, that these promises literally belonging to the Israelites, will really apply to the present, or the anticipated situation of every real Christian. In the discussion of these subjects, we shall follow the example of the passage to pass under review in every respect: when *it* is general, we shall allow ourselves to expatiate on it in general terms; when *it* is particular, we shall also exhibit minute circumstances, which establish it, and distinct events by which it is accomplished.

The lot of Israel is the lot of the church: *it is pleasant and desirable.* “How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob—and thy tabernacles, O Israel.” These are the pavilions that shelter the man from the storms of calamity, and cover him from ruin in the day of evil. The gay and the hardened may affect to despise them, but they frequently feel that they need them: and strong as their present convictions are on the side of religion, they have yet to learn how much more forcible and tormenting those convictions will be, when God arises to judgment, and the sinner shall not be permitted to stand in the congregation of the righteous. But how-



ever “goodly” these “tents” are, they are *but* “tents;” and however “pleasant” these “tabernacles,” they are only a *temporary* residence. They must yield to “everlasting habitations;” they shall be exchanged for an eternal temple.

*They are fruitful, and their verdure is perpetual.* “As the vallies are they spread forth”—vallies by “the rivers’ side”—vallies covered with “trees”—and trees which never drop their foliage. If these images express well temporal prosperity, how much more fitly do they apply to spiritual privileges. “There is a river, whose “streams make glad the city of our God.” Rivulets of ordinances and of consolations are perpetually flowing through the church, and arising from the same source—the “Fountain “opened.” The plantation flourishes and is in health. The Psalmist represents a Christian under the image of “a tree planted by rivers of “waters.” He boasts in vain of the possession of religion, whose life and conversation is not influenced by it’s power. A mere professor is a barren plant, which must be rooted out and cast into the fire. But those whom the right hand of God has planted, shall “still bring “forth fruit in old age”—and their leaf shall never wither.”

V. 7 and 8. “*He shall pour the water out of*



*“ his buckets, and his seed shall be in many  
“ waters, and his king shall be higher than Agag,  
“ and his kingdom shall be exalted. God brought  
“ him forth out of Egypt, he hath as it were the  
“ strength of an unicorn: he shall eat up the na-  
“ tions his enemies, and shall break their bones,  
“ and shall pierce them through with his arrows.”*

The leading features of these verses are, increase, prosperity, dignity, success, and permanency.

*Increase:* for “ his seed shall be in many waters.” The armies of this favoured people were then numerous and mighty: but they were still far behind the population and the glory of the Jewish nation at the close of the reign of David, and during the whole of the reign of Solomon.

*Prosperity:* “ He shall pour water out of his buckets.” No drought shall consume their harvests and destroy the rising promise of the year. Plenty of water, showers of rain, the falling of the dew, are continually in the Scriptures figurative of abundance, inasmuch as they are the natural causes of it: and Christian prosperity borrows the same figure, for the graces of the Spirit are represented by the term living “ waters.”

*Dignity:* “ his king shall be higher than Agag.” The prophetic eye saw, and the prophetic tongue foretold the day, when Agag,



spared by Saul, and flattering himself that the bitterness of death was passed, bowed himself at the feet of Samuel, and was hewed in pieces. The kingdom of Amalek was then destroyed---the prediction of Balaam was then fulfilled---and the house of Israel waxed stronger and stronger.

*Success:* they were to devour their enemies, to break their bones, and to “ pierce them through with his arrows.” It would afford us no personal instruction to enumerate the victories which fulfilled this prophecy: for alas! victories stand connected with wars, and fightings, and blood-shed; and who could delight to detail such scenes of calamity?

*Permanency:* “ his kingdom shall be exalted:” and how exalted? principally by its connection with David’s greater Son, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and whose name shall endure for ever. We have seen the dawn of its greatness: but when our eyes are sealed by death our children shall witness the extent of this promise; for the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.

V. 9. “ *He couched, he lay down as a lion, and as a great lion, who shall stir him up? Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee.*” What an awful lesson does



this terrible denunciation teach! Did not the prophet's lips tremble, when he pronounced this sentence of condemnation against himself? What did he at Moab? What did he on the top of that Mountain? Went he not thither to *curse*? Man frequently pronounces his own sentence! Many a profane swearer has done it, without reflection! Many an ungodly minister has done it, more solemnly and deliberately! has done it from sabbath to sabbath and from year to year—has been an instrument of good to others, without being a partaker of the grace of God himself—has declared the decision of divine justice against transgression, while he himself fell under the denunciation, and God said, “Out of thy own mouth will I condemn thee thou wicked servant!”

This unexpected termination of so unpleasing a series of prediction to the interests and the wishes of Balak subdued the last remains of his patience; and the mutual recriminations passing between the soothsayer and his employer, prove the basis of worldly friendship to be laid in selfishness, it's nature to be transient, and it's issue disappointment. But before they separated, Balaam “advertised” the offended monarch “what this people should do to his people “in the latter days.” Having nothing to apprehend from his indignation and nothing fur-



ther to hope from his favour; stripped of those base principles which had hitherto influenced him, because there remained to him no longer an object to which they could be successfully directed; deprived of the gay visions which avarice and ambition had thus far alike placed before him; it is probable that he declared the will of God, so hostile to the King of Moab, with the less reluctance, inasmuch as he had no longer any interest at stake. At all events the train of prophecy which follows is more distinct and less general than those which preceded; and we shall now be required, for the first time during our discussion of his eloquent and impressive parables, to descend to particulars. It is unnecessary to examine the terms with which his predictions open; and which correspond with the exordium of the last parable; or to repeat our remarks upon them. We proceed immediately to the subject of this farewell address to the ungrateful monarch who was driving from his presence a man, who, amidst all his failings, had faithfully and perseveringly endeavoured to serve him. He begins with a most affecting representation of his own situation relative to a most desirable approaching event.

V. 17. *“ I shall see him, but not now : I shall  
“ behold him, but not nigh : there shall come a  
“ Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out*



“ *of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab,*  
“ *and destroy all the children of Sheth.*” The word rendered “ *the corners of Moab,*” had been better translated “ *the princes of Moab.*” The direct reference of these words appears to be to David; the more remote, but more enlarged direction of them, to David’s Lord.

Respecting no other temporal prince could be said with truth that which is here predicted of David: and for the plainest of all reasons we fix the prophecy upon him, because by him it was exactly fulfilled. The “ *Star and Sceptre*” are terms naturally implying splendour and power. The first image suits the genius, and accords with the usual language of eastern nations, who constantly denote a monarch by this figure: and from the east, the metaphor passed through the whole world, and at length became transferred to the things themselves; so that the appearance of a comet, or the rising of an unknown star, was commonly and universally supposed to portend, the birth of some illustrious prince, or a revolution in some mighty empire. The latter emblem seems most naturally to accord with monarchical government, of which the Sceptre is an appendage, but which at the time of the delivery of this prophecy the government of Israel was not. This Sceptre was to “ *smite the princes of Moab;*” which prediction was



eminently fulfilled, when “the Moabites became  
 “the servants of David, and brought him pre-  
 “sents.” There is a considerable difficulty at-  
 tending the close of this verse: “he shall de-  
 “stroy all the children of Sheth.” A variety  
 of interpretations have been given to this pas-  
 sage; and if “in the multitude of counsellors  
 “is safety”—he who consults them will also  
 frequently find distraction. Some read, “he  
 “shall *rule over*,” instead of “*destroy*, all the  
 “children of Sheth:” perhaps this is the most  
 natural exposition of the passage. Others read  
 “the *sons of the East*,” in place of “the *chil-*  
 “*dren of Sheth*.” Some translate it, “he shall  
 “destroy *the sons of noise*:” in order to support  
 this rendering, one Hebrew word must be written  
 for another\*; and any such alteration is a bold  
 attempt. This last translation is supported by  
 a parallel passage in Jeremiah, apparently quoted  
 from this text: if the words of Jeremiah be a  
 quotation of those of Balaam, then it is evident  
 that the reading of the verse before us must  
 have been different in the days of the prophet:  
 but besides that such an error appears inconsis-  
 tent with the care constantly exercised by those,  
 whose office it was to preserve the sacred writ-  
 ings, and that there is no certain evidence that

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\* שֶׁת for שֶׁת



the passage in question is a quotation from these predictions, it is manifest the first part of the verse alluded to in Jeremiah is taken not from this place, but from the twenty-eighth verse of the twenty-first chapter of the book of Numbers; as may be immediately seen by comparing the two passages with each other. The words of Jeremiah are, “a fire shall come forth out of Heshbon, and a flame from the midst of Sihon, and shall devour the corner of Moab, and the crown of the head of the tumultuous ones\* :”—and the import of the passage, so far as Moab is concerned, is indisputably the same. Nor are these different opinions all : some understand by “the children of Sheth,” the Idumeans; and others imagine that “*Sheth*” was some prince or place of Moab, now unknown†. After all, conjecture is but poor argument in Scriptural discussion; and when the hand of time has decidedly shrouded any particular prophecy or event, we ought to be content to leave it under its venerable covering, rather than to produce our own plausible but uncertain speculations as a substitute for the fact concealed from our researches. We shall not detain you to produce the reasons by which different critics

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\* Jer. xlviii. 45.

† See the Note at the end of the Lecture.



justify these different sentiments: because, when all is said, they are but hypothetical. Enough of the prophecy is clear and obvious, and to *that* we shall pass on, when we have made two remarks upon this obscurity—first, that there are many parts of the Bible to us unintelligible *merely* from its antiquity; and secondly, that what we “know not now, we shall know hereafter.”

V. 18 and 19. “*And Edom shall be a possession*”—such it was made, when David “put  
“garrisons in Edom, and all they of Edom be-  
“came David’s servants.” In a singular passage of the book of Psalms, it appears to me that David unites the celebration of these two conquests, and that he had these victories in his remembrance, when he said, “*Moab is my wash-*  
“*pot*”—that is, I have applied it to the most contemptible services, and have made it the refuse of all things—“*Over Edom have I cast*  
“*my shoe*”—as a mark of my dominion, and of their subjugation—figurative but striking language! “*Seir also shall be a possession for*  
“*his enemies:*” Bishop Newton observes that “*Seir*” is the name of the mountains of Edom—implying his conquest of their strong places.  
“*And Israel shall do valiantly:*” and in the reign of David, they undoubtedly attained the zenith of their military renown, which conducted them to the summit of their national glory under the succeeding peaceful and prosperous



reign of Solomon. “*Out of Jacob shall come, he that shall have dominion, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city.*” This was accomplished, when the general of David’s army, dwelt six months with all Israel “in Edom,” until he had cut off every male.

So far we apprehend these predictions are immediately applicable to David: but we cannot *confine* them to him, because there are some particulars which seem decidedly to relate to a greater than David: especially if we translate that obscure passage, “he shall destroy all the children of Sheth,” as some have done, “he shall rule over all the sons of men”—this can be true of no character that has yet appeared, and will be accomplished only in the future universal empire of Jesus Christ. Perhaps we should be justified in applying this passage to the Messiah, were it only on these principles, that David was, in his kingdom, in his conquests, in his person, and in his sufferings, for the most part, a type of the Redeemer. But there are other reasons, in addition to this general principle, which we shall state, before we consider the prophecy alluding, as we suppose, to the desire of all nations.

1. It will appear in the examination of that verse upon which our opinion is chiefly founded, that the images employed to prefigure the extraordinary Governor, whoever he might be,



whose rising Balaam foresaw, are applicable in the strictest sense to the person, the offices, and the dominion of Christ; while they form a remarkable coincidence with the metaphors by which he was afterwards represented.

2. The most learned and celebrated Jewish Paraphrasts, with the Christian Fathers, agree in applying the passage to the Messiah: so that it can scarcely be considered as the sole offspring of a fruitful imagination.

3. In a candid and accurate examination of Scripture Prophecy, it will be generally granted that many predictions wore two aspects; that these shorter ones especially had often a double reference; and that while they regarded approaching events, they also looked through the lengthened mists of futurity, to a period more remote, when the Lord himself should come to his temple—an event of the very first magnitude, and a point in which prophecy and providence were alike absorbed. There are many passages, which might be produced, of this description: among others is that remarkable verse in Hosea, “I, called my Son out of Egypt”—which indisputably, from its connection, refers to the deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage: yet the Evangelist Matthew applies it to the return of Jesus from Egypt, whither he had fled to avoid the wrath of Herod; and I am not among the number of those who entertain so



partial views of his inspiration, as to imagine he might be mistaken. Other parallel instances might be produced: but your time admonishes me, that this is enough for the present purpose.

4. In those days, clear and decisive revelations were made respecting the Saviour. The Old Testament Scriptures, and the former Dispensation, held him perpetually in view. He was presented to Eve, immediately after man's apostasy, under the title "The Seed of the Woman." To Abraham, he was manifested as his offspring: "in thy Seed, shall all nations of the Earth be blessed." To Moses he appeared "a Prophet like unto himself." To Isaiah he was revealed more perfectly, in all the majesty of that nature,

"Which centred in his make such strange extremes!"

"A child"—yet "the mighty God!"—"A Son"—yet "the Father of Eternity!"—The "Prince of Peace," upon whose "shoulder" universal empire was to sit; and of whose "government and peace," there was to be "no end." Thus also Balaam saw him rise as a "Star," and rule as a "Sceptre." Under these two images, let us draw near with reverence, and behold "the Lord Christ."

First, "THERE SHALL COME A STAR OUT OF JACOB." It is difficult to account for the



coming of the wise men from the East to Jerusalem, in search of Jesus, at the birth of our Lord, had not this prophecy been well known, at least traditionally in their country, and understood to refer to the advent of the Messiah, then universally an object of greater or of less expectation. An unknown Star made it's appearance in the heavens, the figure, the motion, and all the circumstances of which, convinced them that it was supernatural. What then? Why did they come to Jerusalem? It may be answered that it's direction led them to that quarter. But why did they come expecting the birth of some extraordinary person, rather than the occurrence of some extraordinary event? If it be replied that a comet was supposed to signify an extraordinary birth, we deny, that in ancient times, and in the heathen world, it was *confined* to the indication of the advent of some extraordinary personage: but we contend, and we are not afraid to say that the testimony of all ancient history will bear out the assertion, that it was at least, as frequently supposed to portend some great revolution. But these men came, "saying, Where is HE that is  
" born King of the Jews: for we have seen *his*  
" STAR in the East, and are come to worship  
" him." It can scarcely be doubted that Balaam's prophecies then still prevailed among "the



“Mountains of the East,” and that these Sages understood this luminous appearance in the heavens to refer to Him, whom Balaam called “the STAR of Jacob.”

The names and titles ascribed to Jesus in a variety of subsequent places in the Scriptures, seem to allude to this singular prediction; he is denominated “the day-spring from on high,” by the father of John the Baptist: the “day-star,” by the apostle Peter; and in the book of the Revelations he styles himself “the bright and Morning-star.”

The metaphor accords well with his Nature and with his offices. With his *Nature*. A Star, it is said, in Egyptian hieroglyphics, denoted the Deity. Thus God also reproved Israel, by the prophet Amos, and said, “ye have borne the tabernacle of *the Star* of your God, which ye made to yourselves.” Thus also testified against them the first Martyr Stephen—“Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and *the Star* of your god, Remphan, figures which ye made, to worship them”—and which were therefore doubtless considered appropriate emblems of the Divinity. This metaphor is, therefore, probably used according to the genius of eastern language, to shadow out the dignity of the Saviour’s nature. It also agrees with his *offices*. A star is frequently an important guide.



Before the invention of the compass, what was the mariner at sea, when “for many days neither sun nor star appeared?”—A star is concluded to be a sun diminished by distance, possessing heat as well as light, and the probable centre of another system. There is life and light in the Saviour. Those only perish in darkness and in death, who are in relation to Him, as we are placed in respect of the fixed stars—at an immeasurable distance. Those also who seek him as a guide, will find him “the way, the truth, and the life;” and no one can “come to the Father, except by him.” Purity, beauty, majesty, a variety of other particulars might be produced, if it could be necessary, to prove the elegance and the fitness of this image in application to Christ.

Secondly, “A SCEPTRE SHALL RISE OUT OF ISRAEL.” Is a Sceptre the emblem of *Authority* and of *Power*? He claims all “power in heaven and on earth.” He exerted the power which he claims in manifold ways, during his pilgrimage with man; in the suspension of the laws of nature; in the controul of furious elements, and more furious passions; in the cure of mortal diseases; in the command of the invisible world, and over the empire of death. This was the Sceptre of Israel which smote the



foundation of the throne of darkness; and “Satan fell as lightning from heaven.” Is a Sceptre the emblem of *Majesty*, and of *Dominion*? Hear him speak of himself—“I am the “first and the last”—“I am Alpha and Omega, “the beginning and the ending, saith the “Lord, which is, and which was, and which “is to come, the Almighty.” Hear the language of his Apostles—They call him “The “King eternal, immortal, invisible”—“the only “true God our Saviour.” Hear the testimony of the Father himself—of the Son he saith, “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; “a sceptre of righteousness is the Sceptre of “thy Kingdom.” Thus we believe that the irresistible sway of Jesus Christ was the subject of Balaam’s prophecy; and was typified also by the inferior dominion of David—his ancestor “according to the flesh.”

Before I proceed to the discussion of the little that now remains of Balaam’s predictions, it will be necessary to detain you in order to make a few general observations very closely connected with the subject, and which I wish to introduce here as preliminary considerations, that they may not interrupt us hereafter as we pass on. With respect to *providence*, we know that the ways of God are perfect, but our comprehension of them is limited. It is yet night



with us, and will continue so till we quit the present state of being. Our brightest moments, are but as the dawn of the morning, when cloud and mist rest upon the landscape, and every object seen at all, is discerned only darkly and uncertainly. Man is acting irrationally when he attempts to bring down all the operations of an infinite mind to his standard. All that he comprehends of the plans of God, is harmonious and wise : his conclusion ought to be, when he no longer comprehends them perfectly, that the defect is in himself and not in the thing contemplated : but unhappily the pride of his heart leads him to another and a false conclusion, that what his limited capacity cannot comprehend, is in itself incomprehensible. The fact only is, that it is so to *him* : but this involves nothing respecting the thing itself, and proves nothing except that it is of a higher order than his own. The same thing may be remarked with respect to *prophecy*. Some parts of the predictions before us, are a little obscure in themselves, and are made more so by commentators. Every man conjectures, if he can do nothing else ; and thus hypothesis is heaped upon hypothesis, because the interpreter will aim at originality, till amidst much learning and ingenuity, the very existence and purport of the text vanish out of sight. In the few verses which remain to be



considered, we shall not follow expositors through all their intricacies; but at once shew what appears to us the natural direction of the words. Where we cannot trace the fulfillment of them, we shall confess our inability, entreating you to keep in mind what we have now promised. Prophecy must be explained by Providence, to be clearly understood. When, therefore, it relates to remote events the very remembrance of which has perished, and to transactions the record of which is lost, the prediction of necessity becomes obscure: we have no longer the medium through which it might be interpreted: the defect is not in the prediction, which clearly related to positive events; but in the absence of the history which could have rendered it luminous. Having established this, we grant nothing to infidelity, in granting that the prediction is obscure; since it is *not* so in *itself*, but *appears* so to *us*, because of the scantiness of our information on the subjects to which it refers. We shall therefore never shrink from confessing that we do not perceive it's meaning, where we cannot trace it's relation to events connected with it, but which the hand of time has blotted out from the records of this world. These remarks will be found to apply to some preceding parts of this Lecture, and to some of the former pro-



phesies of Balaam, as well as to those which yet remain briefly to be considered.

V. 20. “ *And when he looked on Amalek, he took up his parable, and said, Amalek was the first of the nations, but his latter end shall be, that he perish for ever.*” Amalek is justly called “the first of the nations,” from its splendour and antiquity. The origin of this people cannot be now traced with any degree of certainty. They are mentioned in the connection of that battle from the disastrous issue of which Abraham rescued Lot; and were therefore considerably older, than their neighbours Moab and Edom. This prediction of Balaam, but confirms what God had before ordained and asserted by the mouth of Moses; for “he is of one mind, and who can turn him?”—In due time the sentence began to be executed, and it is now completely finished. Saul withered their power, and desolated their country. Scarcely had they recovered a little strength, when David smote a more dreadful blow, which he reiterated at Ziglag. And in the days of Hezekiah, the sons of Simeon destroyed the remnant.” We look around for them at this hour, and they are not! We have learned only enough of them from tradition to know that “Amalek was the first of the nations”—while we are witnesses



“ his latter end has been that he has perished  
“ for ever!”

V. 21 and 22. “ *And he looked on the Kenites ;*  
“ *and took up his parable, and said, Strong is*  
“ *thy dwelling-place, and thou puttest thy nest*  
“ *in a rock ; nevertheless, the Kenite shall be*  
“ *wasted until Ashur shall carry thee away cap-*  
“ *tive.*” There is the same uncertainty respect-  
ing the origin of the Kenites, which we noticed  
in respect of Amalek ; and it is of little conse-  
quence to the prophecy that we should attempt  
to remove it. We read of “ Kenites dwelling  
“ with the Amalekites,” in the days of Saul.  
The Amalekites were to be utterly destroyed :  
but the “ Kenites were to be carried away cap-  
“ tive by Ashur, or the Assyrian.” Now mark  
how the prophecy was guarded by Providence.  
When Saul was raised up to destroy Amalek, he  
was withheld by an invisible hand from involv-  
ing the Kenites in their ruin. He did not seem  
to have this prophecy, but another event in  
view, when he spared them ; and thus fulfilled  
the purposes of heaven, without knowing it.  
“ And Saul said to the Kenites, Go, get you  
“ down from among the Amalekites, *lest I de-*  
“ *stroy you with them :* for ye shewed kindness  
“ to all the children of Israel, when they came  
“ out of Egypt. *So the Kenites departed from*  
“ *among the Amalekites.*” But a torrent was



collecting in Assyria, which rolled it's impetuous flood over Judea, and, with resistless violence, desolated all surrounding nations: the Kenites were doubtless swept away by it, since we read of some of them emerging from it's waves with the Jews, at the end of the captivity. Thus was "the Kenite wasted, till Ashur carried him away captive."

V. 23 and 24. "*And he took up his parable, and said, Alas! who shall live when God doeth this?*"

An awful introduction to the solemn prediction suspended upon it! "*And ships shall come from the coast of Chittim, and shall afflict Ashur, and shall afflict Eber, and he also shall perish for ever!*" In the dissertations of Bishop Newton upon these prophecies, a very long, and very laborious criticism is given, the amount of which establishes that "the coast of Chittim," is a general name for the countries and islands lying upon the Mediterranean: and that Greece, particularly Macedonia; or Italy, or both, (which is most probable) were the countries particularly alluded to, as sending "ships to afflict Ashur." Whether it referred to one, or both of these empires, it is equally true; since they were, separately and successively, the scourge of Asia. Ashur, or Assyria, was first subdued by Alexander the Great; and afterwards Rome overran all it's re-



gions in the days of Trajan. Thus “ships from  
“the coast of Chittim afflicted Ashur.”

It remains that we trace it's fulfillment in relation to “*Eber*.” Now whether it refer to the Jews themselves, the descendants of Heber, or to the people bordering upon the Euphrates, (for the word signifies *beyond*—and the phrase “*beyond the river*,” is sometimes used in the Scriptures to denote those, who dwell on the other side the Euphrates; which is styled *the River*, by way of distinction and pre-eminence) it amounts to the same thing, for in both cases the prediction received it's full accomplishment. If it refer to the *Jews*—they were desolated by Alexander's successors; and were still more grievously afflicted by the Romans, who scattered them abroad over the face of the whole earth: or if it belong to the people bordering upon the Euphrates (which is the most probable, seeing Balaam is predicting the *prosperity* of the Hebrews; and would have been glad to have prophesied evil of the Jews, could he have done it, under their more immediate and more intelligible name of Israel) *they also* were, with the Assyrians, successively subdued by the Greeks and by the Romans.

We have now only to examine the last clause of the verse, which relates to the inhabitants of Chittim themselves; (at least, I presume the



words apply to the principal agent, which is here manifestly Chittim :) of Chittim it is said—  
“*And he also shall perish for ever.*” The conquests of Alexander were rapid, and almost boundless. But his projects were too extensive, and his empire too vast, to be held together by any mortal hand. This he might have foreseen, and have checked his victories and his enterprises midway: but human rapacity has no limits, and the whole world is too narrow for ambition. His throne trembled under it's own weight, while he filled it; and when the stronger arm of death, dragged the victor from his seat, it fell with him. Under his successors his kingdom was dismembered; among themselves it was rent in pieces; and the whole Grecian empire was subverted by the rising genius of Rome.

On this circumstance I cannot forbear giving you the sentiments and the observations of an historian, whose faithfulness of narration, extent of judgment, and force of reasoning are to be equalled only by his piety. His history, which stands a monument of human industry, is a fund of information and entertainment inexhaustible; and I will take the liberty to recommend it to young persons, as one of the best guides to trace the footsteps of Providence in the accomplishment of prophecy, that literature has furnished. Rollin in his *Ancient History* has said—

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“ The only remedy for the various calamities”  
resulting from the death of Alexander, “ seemed  
“ to consist in the speedy nomination of a suc-  
“ cessor ; and the troops, as well as the officers,  
“ and the whole Macedonian state, seemed at  
“ first to be very desirous of this expedient :  
“ and indeed, their common interest and secu-  
“ rity, with the preservation of their new con-  
“ quests, amidst the barbarous nations that sur-  
“ rounded them, made it necessary for them to  
“ consider this election as their first and most  
“ important care, and to turn their thoughts to  
“ the choice of a person qualified to fill so ar-  
“ duous a station, and sustain the weight of it  
“ in such a manner as to be capable of support-  
“ ing the general order and tranquillity. But  
“ it had already been written, ‘ that the king-  
“ ‘ dom of Alexander should be divided and rent  
“ ‘ asunder after his death’, and that it should  
“ not be transmitted in the usual manner ‘ to  
“ ‘ his posterity\*. No efforts of human wisdom  
“ could establish a sole successor to that prince.  
“ In vain did they deliberate, consult, and de-  
“ cide ;”—Isaiah had said, ‘ It shall not be, it  
‘ shall not stand, it shall not be carried into  
‘ completion† ; “ nothing could be executed

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\* Dan. xi. 4.

† Non erit, non stabit non fiat. ISAI.



“ contrary to the pre-ordained event, and no-  
“ thing short of it could possibly subsist. A  
“ superior and invisible power had already dis-  
“ posed of the kingdom, and divided it by an  
“ inevitable decree. The circumstances of this  
“ partition had been denounced nearly three  
“ centuries before the time: the portions of it  
“ had already been assigned to different pos-  
“ sessors, and nothing could frustrate that di-  
“ vision, which was only to be deferred for a  
“ few years. Till the arrival of that period,  
“ men indeed might raise commotions, and con-  
“ cert a variety of movements; but all their  
“ efforts would only tend to the accomplish-  
“ ment of what had been ordained by the sove-  
“ reign Master of kingdoms, and of what had  
“ been foretold by his prophet\*.”

Rome stretched her sceptre in turn over the enslaved world, and held her prodigious conquests through many successive ages. But Rome gradually yielded to the impressions of time, the innovations of luxury, and the attacks of barbarians. The Northern Nations overthrew her venerable throne. Greece and Rome now exist only in name, in history, in ruins; and thus Chittim “ also has perished for ever!”

We now bid farewell to Balaam; and it is a

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\* Rollin's Anc. Hist. vol. vii. sect. 1. p. 2 and 3. 8vo. edit. 1800



melancholy farewell ! He had sacrificed to the king of Moab, his conscience, his integrity, his peace of mind, and his future happiness : yet because he could not sacrifice Israel also (which in truth Balak knew he would willingly have done had not a stronger arm restrained him) he was sent home in disgrace, proscribed as an offender, and urged to flee on peril of stronger evidences of indignation on part of the offended monarch. Not only was he thus dismissed, unrewarded and insulted : but his employer aggravated his cruel disappointment, by taunting him with what he designed to have done for him. O my friend ! if indeed you are wasting your best days, and sacrificing your noblest powers in the service of the world and of sin—turn again and look once more at Balaam, with melancholy steps retracing his journey back to the mountains of the east, unattended and unhonoured ! Not such a return had he anticipated, when he set out accompanied by the princes of Moab, with the promise of a reward as boundless as his ambition ! See then the picture of your own destination ! In the evening of life, when you expect from the world the promised recompense ; you will be left to lay your hoary head upon a pillow of thorns ; and find too late, that “ the wages of sin is death ;” and that the



smiles of the world are destruction. Descending into the vale of years, you shall “look for peace, but find despair, companion of your way!”

Balaam is now no more! He is as though he had never been, so far as himself is concerned! What does it now avail him, that the renown of his talents reached the court of Moab, from the retirement of the mountains of the East? What does it avail him, that a monarch sought his assistance, and that a king became a suppliant to him? And who, or what, is Balak? All his wealth bestowed upon the unhappy man who preferred his friendship to the friendship of God, had he kept his promise to it's widest extent, could not now compensate the wretched but illustrious prophet of Mesopotamia! His honours—his riches—have perished with him: his guilt—his infamy remain for ever!

So shall perish all thine enemies, O Lord! Christian, do not envy them their transient renown. Hold on thy way, through the lowly, sequestered vale of life rejoicing! Advance softly and silently—obscure and unnoticed to heaven! There is thy life, thy renown, thy record, thy recompense! The sword of justice quivers over the head of guilty greatness. God says, to them in the very midst of their



hopes—"Return, ye children of men"—and  
 "see! their countenances change, and they  
 go to their place." The voice of mortality  
 also addresses you: but the voice of Jesus min-  
 gles with the notes of death. He calls you  
 home. "Arise," he says, "enter into the joy  
 of thy Lord!"



## NOTES.

## NOTES TO THE SIXTH LECTURE.

THE most obscure passage in the prophecies discussed in the preceding Lecture, is the declaration that the "Star" and "Sceptre" of "Jacob" should "smite the corners of Moab, and *destroy all the children of Sheth.*" In the foregoing pages, I have expressed the meaning of the passage as it appears to me; and I shall, in this note, subjoin the sentiments of different Commentators, on the respective merits of which, the reader will form his own opinion.

Bishop Newton says—"If by Sheth was meant the Son of Adam, then *all the children of Sheth* are all mankind, the posterity of Cain and Adam's other sons having all perished in the Deluge, and the line only of Sheth having been preserved in Noah and his family: but it is very harsh to say that any King of Israel would destroy all mankind, and therefore the Syriac and Chaldee soften it, that he shall *subdue* all the sons of Sheth, and *rule over* all the sons of men. (Et subjugabit omnes filios Seth, *Syr.* Et dominabitur omnium filiorum hominum. *Chal.*) The word occurs only in this place, and in Isaiah, xxii. 5. where it is used in the sense of *breaking down* or *destroying*: and as particular places, Moab and Edom are mentioned both before and after; so it is reasonable to conclude that not all mankind in general, but some particular persons were intended by the expression of *the sons of Sheth.* The Jerusalem Targum translates it *the sons of the East*, the Moabites lying east of Judea. Rabbi Nathan says that *Sheth* is the name of a city in the border of Moab. Grotius imagines Sheth to be the name of some famous king among the Moabites. Our Poole, who is a judicious and useful commentator, says that *Sheth* 'seems to be the name of some then eminent, though now



“ ‘ unknown, place or prince in Moab, where there were many princes,  
 “ ‘ as appears from Numb. xxiii. 6. Amos ii. 3. there being innumera-  
 “ ‘ ble instances of such places or persons sometimes famous, but  
 “ ‘ now utterly lost as to all monuments and remembrances of them?  
 “ Vitranga, in his Commentary upon Isaiah, conceives that the Idu-  
 “ means were intended, the word *Sheth*, signifying a *foundation*, or  
 “ *fortified* place, because they trusted greatly in their castles and  
 “ fortifications. But the Idumeans are mentioned afterwards; and  
 “ it is probable that as two hemistichs relate to them, two also relate  
 “ to the Moabites; and the reasons of the appellation assigned by  
 “ Vitranga, is as proper to the Moabites as to the Idumeans. It is  
 “ common in the style of the Hebrews, and especially in the poetic  
 “ parts of scripture, and we may observe it particularly in these pro-  
 “ phesies of Balaam, that the same thing in effect is repeated in  
 “ other words, and the latter member of each period is exegetical of  
 “ the former: as in the passage before us—‘ I see him, but not  
 “ ‘ now; I behold him, but not nigh:’ and then again, ‘ there shall  
 “ ‘ come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel:’  
 “ and again afterwards, ‘ And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also  
 “ ‘ shall be a possession for his enemies.’ There is great reason  
 “ therefore to think, that the same manner of speaking was conti-  
 “ nued here, and consequently that *Sheth* must be the name of some  
 “ eminent place or person among the Moabites; “ and shall smite  
 “ ‘ the princes of Moab, and destroy all the sons of Sheth.’ ”

*Bp. Newton on the Proph. vol. i. Dissert. v. p. 73 and 74.*

The Writers of the Anc. Univ. Hist. thus express their opinion.  
 “ According to the genius of the Hebrew tongue, wherein it is ele-  
 “ gant to repeat the same sentence in different expressions, by the  
 “ children of Seth, the Moabites should be intended; but why they  
 “ are so called we cannot find. There is a passage in Jeremiah which  
 “ seems to prove, that in his time this place was differently read.  
 “ A fire, says that prophet, shall come out of Heshbon, a flame from  
 “ the midst of Sihon, which shall devour the corner of Moab, and  
 “ the crown of the head of the tumultuous ones; or, as is better  
 “ rendered in the Margin, of the children of noise. The former  
 “ part of this passage is taken from another text, and the latter from  
 “ that which we are now speaking of. The difference between them  
 “ is very little in the original”—(only 7 in place of 7) “ Jeremiah



“ instead of קרקר karkar, shall destroy, having קדקד kadkod, the  
 “ crown of the head (which is the reading of the Samaritan Penta-  
 “ teuch in this very place) and instead of שת Seth, שאון Shaon,  
 “ noise. But we dare not hence make any correction.”

*Anc. Univ. Hist. vol. ii. B. i. Chap. 3. p. 108. Note N.*

*Dublin edit. 1745.*

Dr. Geddes renders the passage—“ *The sons of sedition.* The  
 “ Heb. is בני שת; in our common translation rendered ‘ the chil-  
 “ dren of Seth:’ and so indeed most of the ancient and modern  
 “ versions. But what, pray, has Seth, or Sheth, to do with Moab?  
 “ I am convinced that שת here means *sedition, contempt, rebellion,*  
 “ &c. See the root שטה, the Arab. שתחת, the Sam. שתשת, the  
 “ Ethiopic SHAT, and the Chald. and Syr. שוט; and comp. Jere-  
 “ miah in the verse already quoted” (the same is referred to by  
 Univ. Hist. and in the preceding Lecture) “ where he has שטן  
 “ instead of שת. The Moabites were subdued by David, and made  
 “ tributary to Israel: but after the death of Ahab they rebelled;  
 “ but were reconquered by the joint efforts of Joram and Joshaphat,  
 “ assisted by the King of Edom. Comp. 2 Sam. 8. 2. and 2 Kings  
 “ 3. 4 to 24. But under the denomination of בני שת, sons of  
 “ sedition, may be designed every turbulent neighbour.”

*Dr. Geddes' Crit. Rem. upon Num. xxiv. 17. vol. i. p. 400.*

Respecting the whole Verse, the excellent Saurin remarks—“ Ce  
 “ fut alors qu’il prononça ce fameux Oracle, dont le sens a partagé les  
 “ Interprètes dans tous les Siècles: *Je le voi: mais non pas mainte-*  
 “ *nant: je le regarde, mais non pas de près. Une Etoile est procé-*  
 “ *dée de Jacob, un Sceptre s’est élevé d’Israël: il transpercera les*  
 “ *coins de Moab, et il détruira tous les Enfants de Seth.* Tous les  
 “ sentimens sont réunis sur un article, c’est que Balaam prédit un  
 “ Conquérant: peut-être même qu’en l’appellant *une Etoile*, il s’ac-  
 “ commodoit à cette ancienne opinion que l’apparition des Comètes  
 “ marquait, ou l’exaltation, ou la chute des Royaumes. Quelques  
 “ Interprètes ont crû que c’étoit la pensée de ces Mages, dont il est  
 “ parlé dans l’Evangile, qui disoient: *Où est le Roi des Juifs, car*  
 “ *nous avons vu son Etoile en Orient?* Mais si l’on s’accorde dans  
 “ la pensée que Balaam predisoit un Roi, l’on se partage quand il  
 “ est question de déterminer quel est le Roi qu’il avoit en vue.



“ Quelques-uns l’entendent de David, qui asservit les Moabites, et  
 “ qui auroit ainsi vérifié ce mot de l’Oracle : *Il transpercera les*  
 “ *coins*, ou comme portent quelques anciennes Editions des Septante,  
 “ *les Princes de Moab*. Mais plusieurs Interprètes Juifs et Chré-  
 “ tiens l’expliquent du Messie. Un Imposteur Juifs trompa plusieurs  
 “ de ceux de sa Nation sous l’Empire d’Hadrien. Il prit le nom de  
 “ *Barchochéba*, c’est-à-dire, *Fils de l’Etoile*, et se donna pour ce  
 “ Messie que Balaam avoit en vûe. Les Juifs après avoir décou-  
 “ vert son imposture l’appellèrent *Bar-coziba*, c’est-à-dire, *Fils du*  
 “ *Mensonge*.

“ Il y a aussi quelque obscurité dans cette autre expression : *Il*  
 “ *détruira tous les Enfans de Seth*. Si on la prend dans un sens au-  
 “ quel elle peut etre restreinte, elle signifie l’Eglise. Si l’on y at-  
 “ tache l’idée qu’elle offre naturellement à l’Esprit, elle marque tout  
 “ le Genre humain. En quel de ces deux sens qu’on la prenne, il  
 “ faudra lui faire beaucoup de violence pour en trouver l’accomplis-  
 “ sement dans la personne de David, même dans celle du Messie.  
 “ La conjecture de quelques Savans, adoptée par un célèbre Cri-  
 “ tique, est un elef à ce passage. Ils présument qu’il y avoit quel-  
 “ que peuple qui portoit le nom de Seth, et qui étoit voisin de la  
 “ Moabitide. Grotius croit que c’étoit un Roi de ce temps-là.  
 “ Aussi Balaam après avoir prédit la ruïne de Moab, et de ceux  
 “ qu’il apelle *les Enfans de Seth*, peut-être sous cet emblème, celle des  
 “ ennemis de l’Eglise, prédit celle des Iduméens, celle des Amalé-  
 “ kites, celle des Kénians, non des Descendans de Jéthro Beau-Père  
 “ de Moyse, mais de ceux dont il est parlé dans le chap. xv. de la  
 “ Génèse. Tous ces peuples étoient voisins de la Moabitide. Balaam  
 “ s’écria a la vûe des malheurs qui devoient fondre sur toutes ces nations  
 “ *malheur à celui qui vivra quand le Dieu fort fera ces choses !* Il porta  
 “ même sa vûe jusques aux conquêtes qu’ Alexandre le Grand fit sur  
 “ les Assyriens, et si nous nous en rapportons à quelques Interprètes,  
 “ il prophétisa même la destruction totale des Juifs sous le nom  
 “ d’ *Heber*, un de leurs Patriarches : Commentaire qui a ses diffi-  
 “ cultez.”

Saur. *Disc. sur la Bible*, tome i. *Disc. lxxv. p. 515, 516. fol.*  
*a la Haye, 1728.*

*Then it was he pronounced that famous oracle, which has so divided*  
*commentators, in all ages, to develop the meaning of it. “ I shall*  
*“ see him but not now, &c. ver. 17.” All opinions unite in one cir-*



cumstance, which is, that Balaam spoke of a conqueror ; it may be, also, in calling him a star, he accommodated himself to that ancient notion, that the appearance of comets denoted either the elevation or ruin of kingdoms. Some interpreters have thought that this was the belief also of the Magi mentioned in the Gospel, who inquired, "Where is the King of the Jews ? for we have seen his STAR in the east."—But if they were agreed, that Balaam predicted a king, they are divided as to THE King whom he intended. Some think it was David, who subdued the Moabites, and who might thus be said to verify that part of the prediction—"He shall smite the corners"—or as some ancient copies of the Septuagint translate it, "the princes of Moab." But a great many commentators, both Jewish and Christian, explain it of the Messiah. A Jewish impostor deceived several of his own nation in the reign of the Emperor Adrian ; he assumed the name of BARCHOHEBA, that is to say, the Son of a STAR ; and declared himself the Messiah meant by Balaam. The Jews, after they discovered the cheat, called him BAR-COZIBA, or the Son of a Lie.

There is also some obscurity in that other expression—"he shall destroy all the children of Sheth." If it be taken in the sense to which it may be restrained, it signifies the Church ; if we affix to it the idea which it naturally offers to the mind, it implies all mankind. But in either of these two meanings, we must do great violence to it, to find the accomplishment of it in David, or even in the Messiah. The conjecture of some Learned Men, and which has been adopted by a celebrated critic (M. le Clerc) affords a key to this passage. They suppose that there was a people who bore the name of Sheth, and that they were neighbours to Moab. Grotius conjectures that it was a king of that time. Accordingly, Balaam, having foretold the destruction of Moab, and of those whom he calls the Children of Sheth ; and perhaps, under this emblem, of the enemies of the Church, goes on to foretel that of the Idumeans, of the Amalekites, of the Kenites, not the descendants of Jethro the father-in-law of Moses, but of those mentioned in the 15th chapter of Genesis. All these nations were neighbours of the Moabites. At the foresight of these evils about to fall upon all these nations, he exclaimed, "Alas ! who shall live when God doeth this !" He extended his view even to the conquests of Alexander the Great, over the Assyrians ; and, if we may believe some In-



interpreters he prophesied even the total destruction of the Jews, under the name of HEBER, one of their Patriarchs: A Comment not without it's difficulties.

The opinion of the Learned Poole on this passage has already been quoted in the Extract from Bp. Newton. He allows that the word קרקר which is rendered in our translation *vastabit*—"destroy"—may be rendered with equal propriety *subjugabit* "subdue:" and in support of this last translation produces many Hebrew words, which in their formation acquire a sense not only different, but even opposite to the root whence they are derived: "multa sunt apud Hebræos verba ex nominibus contrario significato efformata." He will not allow the children of Seth to mean all mankind—because the prophecy had all along been specific—and he had been speaking of a certain people, such as, the Moabites, the Edomites, and the Amalekites—because also, that on this supposition the Jews must have destroyed all people, which is not justified by fact. "Non placet; 1. Quia priùs loquitur de certo populo, i. e. de Moabitis, et post hos de Edomæis, et Amalakitis. 2. Tunc Israelitæ detruxissent omnes populos; quod falsum." I confess I do not feel the force of this reasoning: since those who consider the term *children of Seth* to mean all mankind, and the word קרקר to rule over, or to subdue, also refer the victory, and the reign, anticipated in this acceptation of the prediction, to the Messiah; in reference to whom, it is not only not improbable, but is partially accomplished, and must eventually be universally true. For he shall have "the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession." Poole upon the whole thinks that it was the name of some nation, or people, then known, and upon the confines of Judea: that it might especially refer to the Canaanites who were the descendants of Seth more immediately; or that it was the name of a city in the land of Moab; or that it was more probably the name of some very distinguished Ruler among the Moabites. "Videtur esse nomen gentis, vel populi tunc noti, et finitimi Judæis. Forte Cananæos intelligit, qui filii Sethi sunt, Gen. v. Seth est nomen civitatis in terra Moab. Nihil vero propius quàm Seth nominatum fuisse Regem aliquem eximium inter Moabitas."

*Poli Synopsis, &c. tom. 1. Comment. in Num. cap. xxiv. 17.*

*p. 715, 716. Fol.*



The learned and excellent John Fell, whose name is endeared to me by every feeling of gratitude and affection as my earliest instructor, and to whose memory I cannot still but shed tears of sad and pleasing remembrance; whose general information was of such acknowledged extent, and who was especially celebrated for the accuracy and justice of his Biblical criticism—justifies, from the Targums, the translation substituted for the rendering “destroy”—(he even uses a milder term than subdue, or rule over—*protect*) applies the term, children of Sheth, to the whole human race—and the accomplishment of the prophecy, to the Messiah.

“ ‘There shall come a star out of Jacob,’ and a sceptre shall rise  
 “ ‘out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy’  
 “ (or rather *protect*) ‘all the children of Sheth’; for such is the  
 “ meaning of the passage. ‘All the children of Sheth’—are undoubt-  
 “ edly, all mankind. Noah descended from Sheth, and from Noah,  
 “ all the nations that are now upon the face of the earth. To *de-*  
 “ *stroy* all the children of Sheth, would be to leave none to rule  
 “ over—none to exercise the sceptre among men. Thus the Tar-  
 “ gums explain themselves: ‘A mighty Prince shall arise out of the  
 “ ‘house of Jacob, and the Messiah shall be anointed’—Onkelos  
 “ says—‘There shall arise a prince, a king out of Jacob, and the  
 “ ‘Messiah out of Israel shall be anointed.’—In this respect they  
 “ agree with the most learned Christian interpreters of those very  
 “ ancient predictions.”

*Fell's and Hunter's Lect. on the Evid. of Christ. Lect. ii.  
 p. 37, by Mr. Fell.*

Matthew Henry, who with practical exposition, written with great simplicity of style, and much point of expression, blends often judicious and important criticism—refers this passage, without hesitation, to the Messiah; and thus expresses himself on this controverted member of the verse: “But the Messiah shall destroy—or, as some  
 “ read it, shall *rule over* all the children of Sheth: i. e. all the chil-  
 “ dren of men, which descend from Seth the son of Adam; the  
 “ descendants of all the rest of Adam's sons being cut off by the  
 “ Deluge. Christ shall be King, not only of Jacob and Israel, but  
 “ of all the world; so that all the children of Seth shall be either  
 “ governed by his golden sceptre, or dashed in pieces by his iron  
 “ rod. He shall set up an universal rule, authority, and power of



“ his own, and shall put down all opposing rule ; 1 Cor. xv. 24. He  
 “ shall *unwall* all the children of Sheth : so some read it. He shall  
 “ take down all their defences and carnal confidences, so as that  
 “ they shall either admit his government, or lie open to his judg-  
 “ ment.”

*Matt. Henry's Exposition of the Old and New Test. vol. i. on  
 Num. xxiv. 17. Fol.*

In his eloquent and instructive Lectures on Sacred Biography, Dr. Henry Hunter, adverts to this passage only generally (as, to have entered minutely into it, would have been to have departed from his plan, which was to delineate characters) yet he refers it decidedly to the Messiah. “ The burthen of this prophecy has evidently a  
 “ twofold object; the one improving upon, rising above, and extend-  
 “ ing beyond the other. It's primary and nearer object, David,  
 “ God's anointed king, to crush the power of the enemy, and Moab  
 “ in particular, and to perfect the conquest of the promised land.  
 “ It's secondary and more remote one, though first in point of im-  
 “ portance, “ Jesus, the root and offspring of David.”—In the one,  
 “ Balak saw the death of his worldly hopes, the approaching domi-  
 “ nion of a hated power, established on the ruins of his own coun-  
 “ try. In the other, Balaam beheld the ruin of all his prospects be-  
 “ yond the grave ; a light that should shine but to conduct him to  
 “ the place of punishment ; a star that should arise to shed the  
 “ mildest influence on others, but only to breathe pestilence and  
 “ death upon himself ; a Ruler that should exercise universal domi-  
 “ nion, but who, while he presided over his willing and obedient  
 “ subjects in mercy and loving kindness, should rule rebels like him,  
 “ with a rod of iron.”—

*Dr. Hunter's Lect. on Sacred Biography, vol. iv. Lect. xvii.  
 p. 455, 456. Char. of BALAAM.*



## LECTURE VII.

THE PROPHECIES OF MOSES RESPECTING THE  
FORMER, AND THE PRESENT STATE OF THE  
JEWS.

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DEUT. XXVIII. 49—53. AND 64—68.

*The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand: a nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young. And he shall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be destroyed: which also shall not leave thee either corn, wine, or oil, or the increase of thy kine, or flocks of thy sheep, until he have destroyed thee. And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land: and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates throughout all thy land, which the Lord thy God hath given thee. And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters (which the Lord thy God hath given thee) in the siege and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee.——*



*And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone. And among these nations thou shalt find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind. And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee, and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life. In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see. And the Lord shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships, by the way whereof I spake unto thee, Thou shalt see it no more again: and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies, for bondmen, and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you.*

**GOD** has never left himself, in any age of the world, without a witness. Successive periods of time have been distinguished by manifestations peculiar to themselves, and adapted to their respective circumstances and necessities. In the ages before the Flood, human LONGEVITY formed a standing and forcible display of Divine truth and energy. The father transmitted to his children's children those oral communications which he had received directly from the Deity: and they passed through but few hands



to reach many and distinct generations. From the days of Noah to the birth of Moses, although the life of man was shortened, revelation continued uninterrupted, having this impressive evidence, that the intercourse between God and man was IMMEDIATE. Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, spake with him, “as a man speaketh to his friend.” The remembrance of the visits enjoyed in the land of Canaan, accompanied the family of Jacob to the house of Joseph in Egypt; and lived long afterwards amid the cruel bondage of Israel’s more removed descendants. For when “Joseph died, and all that generation,” a new prophet arose; and to the patriarchal succeeded the Mosaic dispensation. This had also its characteristic features. Then were the truths, revealed from the beginning, committed to writing: and a witness, both to the fidelity of former traditions and to the pretensions assumed by Moses, was given in MIRACLES. These miracles were open to the “many thousands of Israel,” and were adapted to their exigences. These were proofs stronger than unbelief itself dared to question—and which they could neither gainsay nor resist. They could not doubt that the power of God was with their General, when they followed him through the Red Sea. *They* could not doubt the divine origin, and the consequent obligations of the



Law, who not only were witnesses in common with ourselves of it's purity, but who also heard the thunder and the sound of the trumpet—who saw the lightning and the “thick darkness” where God was. They could not doubt the reality of HIS existence and paternal care, under whose patronage they lived, and the visible symbol of whose presence preceded them, filling their hearts with courage, and overwhelming their adversaries with dismay. Miracles advanced far into the Jewish history: but before they ceased, a new species of evidence arose, no less conclusive, better adapted to it's age, and the demonstration of which has not failed to this hour. PROPHECY, which had scattered it's radiance partially in the earliest periods of time, became, from David especially, the shining light which gradually increased to perfect day. The gift of prophecy as a distinguishing characteristic of the times ceased with Malachi: and three hundred years after him appeared a DIVINE TEACHER. It is remarkable that for the space of three centuries no revelation was granted; and the world was kept in solemn expectation of HIM, who was to “teach us all things:” thus, the shadows thicken, in the natural world, before the day breaks. Upon this spiritual gloom the Sun of righteousness arose. “The word was made flesh and tabernacled among



“ us.” Under his auspices a new dispensation, more simple, yet more glorious, than that which had now waxed old, prevailed. All the separate rays of Deity, dimly reflected from face to face in his successive servants, were collected, and shone, with more than mortal effulgence, in the face of his Son: “ we beheld his glory, the “ glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father.” In this new dispensation MIRACLES AND PROPHECIES were blended. He predicted “ things “ which should shortly come to pass;” and things which are still fulfilling. “ Never man spake as “ this man.” “ Since the world began” such mighty acts were never performed, such sublime doctrines were never taught, such elevated, such pure, such refined precepts, were never delivered. “ He hath done all things well.” “ He magnified the law and made it honourable:” and suffering “ the just for the unjust,” he “ brought “ in an everlasting salvation.”

The peculiar evidences of the Saviour’s mission continued in the hands of his immediate successors ; and after a season these ceased also. The “ working of miracles,” the “ discerning “ of spirits,” the “ divers kinds of tongues” were temporary ; and “ apostles, and prophets,” after the first century yielded to “ pastors and “ teachers.” Then arose the testimony of MARTYRS: men, who, fired by apostolic example, and especially warmed by the love of Jesus, from



Polycarp to these last days, have in succession sealed their testimony to the truth, and evinced their sincerity, with their blood. The liberality of our own times, has sanctioned freedom of inquiry, established liberty of conscience, and extinguished the fires of persecution. But now infidelity rejects the testimony of our predecessors, to whom this “word of reconciliation” was first committed, and who have long since “fallen asleep.” Sceptics demand some present sign in support of Divine revelation; and ask us to produce some present miracle, or some signal interposition, in favour of a cause which claims so high authority, as evidence, which they, removed as they are from it’s commencement, and it’s early testimonies, may be able to understand and to appreciate. We are prepared to answer even this demand: and we shall this evening produce a **STANDING MIRACLE** on the part of the Scriptures, in discussing

**THE PROPHECIES OF MOSES RESPECTING THE  
FORMER, AND THE PRESENT, STATE OF THE  
JEWS:**

A miracle more striking than that which presented itself to him, when he beheld a “bush that burned with fire, and was not consumed.” We allude to the *present* as well as to the former



situation of the Jewish people; and for the confirmation of a large part of the subject of this evening, we shall only appeal to your senses. You shall see a drop suffered to fall into the ocean, and preserved—floating intire, unmingled with the floods, and uninjured by storms perpetually agitating it's troubled and boundless surface. You shall see “the lamp of God” kept alive and burning, amid convulsions which have shaken suns from their sphere, and tempests which have extinguished them. You shall see a people scattered abroad without a leader, survive every sort of oppression, and living to this hour, as numerous and as distinct as ever, while their conquerors are dead, and empires far superior in extent and power to their nation in it's most renowned periods—which were also their victors—have perished.

The subject of this evening may justly excite interest, and claim pre-eminence over those which relate to other historical events; because the Jews were the favoured and the peculiar people of God. It was to punish their guilt, or to promote their prosperity, that other, and larger empires, conquered, or were destroyed. The haughty Nebuchadnezzar was but an instrument in the hand of God to scourge them; and all the purposes of his heart were subverted, whenever those purposes clashed with the Divine de-



cisions respecting Israel. The amiable and victorious Cyrus, was conducted by an invisible hand, and directed by an unknown Power, to glory and conquest over Babylon, only to break the fetters of the Jews, and to restore them to their country. Had not the welfare of Israel, and the predictions of God, required it, the name of Cyrus had not been transmitted to us with the lustre that shines around it; and it is probable that even the eloquence of Xenophon had been lost to the world. We shall find, that upon the predictions respecting the Jews, depend the prophecies belonging to other, and to mightier nations; it is therefore proper to present them first to your attention.

There are several prophecies in relation to the Jews, which will not fall under our notice, for two or three reasons; and we mention them once for all. So extensive a field as the general consideration of the very numerous predictions respecting the house of Israel, would not accord with the conciseness of a course of Lectures professedly aiming at selection. Moreover, other prophecies, of an historical nature, principally relate to the Captivity—the restoration of the two tribes, and the loss of the ten. It is only necessary to observe that they were exactly accomplished. At the end of seventy years, which was the time specified, the two tribes returned to their country: the ten were lost, but not an-



nihilated ; for some of them returned with their brethren. Yet all distinction is removed, and they are at the present moment blended and incorporated with their brethren. No Jew is now able to trace the tribe whence he descends : so that if the Messiah were not really come, they now lack the evidences by which he could be known when he arrived, a part of which evidence, and a very considerable one, must rest upon his Genealogy, which always formed a distinct and impressive part of the prophecies relating to him. There is the less occasion to dwell here upon the question respecting the ten tribes, as it has already been discussed in the Lectures on Scripture Facts. Again—The prophecies which we pass by, were either connected with the Messiah, and will therefore demand our consideration in that connection ; or were local and temporary. They have received their accomplishment, and we have no further interest in them. These, which we now press upon you, refer to events more recent ; are of greater moment from their relation to Christianity ; and some of them are capable of present evidence, because they are still fulfilling. We have also selected the prophecies of Moses, which were conditional, and which, through the sins of the people, foreseen and foretold, became positive, both because they are farther removed from the events themselves, and because they are an epitome of predictions relating to the



same subject, delivered afterwards more at large, by Isaiah, Jeremiah, and others. A paraphrase upon these verses will furnish us with the substance of subsequent and more amplified prophecies, in a narrow compass, and in a pointed manner.

There are two features peculiarly prominent in these predictions of Moses—DESOLATION, and DISPERSION,—the one, accompanied by circumstances of the utmost cruelty, the other, by the most singular preservation. You are to observe,

#### I. THE DESOLATION OF THE JEWS.

V. 49. “*The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth.*”—The REASON of this threatening is to be found in the verses which precede the selected passage. It proceeded on the principle of their alienation from God by wicked works. It is an useful lesson which this dreadful denunciation teaches us. The threatenings of God are always in the first instance conditional. “It shall come to pass if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day, that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee.” This is the



line of divine vengeance, and man seals the condemnation which God exhibits as a guard upon his evil passions.—It is a determined, and a continued, course of sin, that renders his threatened judgments positive. It is then that the “*if*” is blotted out, and a sad but sufficient reason is substituted—“*Because* I have called, and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded: But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me. For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord. *Therefore* shall they eat of the fruit of their own way; and be filled with their own devices.” A more terrible punishment than this cannot be imagined; and this reflection may serve to awaken to a sense of their danger some, who appear disposed to trifle with divine compassion “till the wrath of God arise, and there is no remedy.”

The DIRECTION of this threatening is to the sufferings inflicted upon the Jewish nation by



the hand of the *Romans*. It appears to me absurd to fluctuate, in the application of this prophecy, between the Assyrians and the Romans: because it will apply to the first, only in those general features which might be accommodated to any great nation, while it accords with the last, in all those striking and minute particulars which characterize the whole passage.

THE LORD *will bring*—Behold, the Great Agent in these dreadful scenes! It has been justly remarked, that “temporal blessings when obedient, and temporal punishments when disobedient, are the terms of the Jewish covenant\*.” This position is capable of universal illustration, and is confirmed by every page of their history. In this also, consists one of its grand distinctions from the new Covenant framed in Christianity, which refers rewards and punishments to another world. But in both cases, and under both Covenants, the Agent is the same as the prophecy of Moses reveals. The Lord takes cognizance of transgressions which escape the eyes of the world. The violations of the rights of society, as well as of his law, fall under his scrutiny—“Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.” His wrath is as irresistible as it is just. “If one man sin against another,

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\* Kett on Prophecy, vol. i. p. 105.



“ the judge shall judge him : but if a man sin  
“ against the Lord, who shall entreat for him?”

National judgments are the punishment of national sins: and in the history of empires we see still present retributions, of so awful and impressive a nature, as to silence, in an hour of calm reflection, the doubts which scepticism has laboured to raise, respecting the superintendence of providence, and which extort from the lip of conviction, “ Verily there is a God  
“ that ruleth in the earth.” In the desolations which lay waste the fairest parts of the globe, we are sometimes compelled to see the hand of God lifted up: but who lays these things to heart? Man always is prone to stop short at second causes. He seldom regards more than the instrument. He is satisfied with deploring the effect. We are carried beyond these inferior considerations, in the passage before us. When it represents an enemy thundering at the gates of Jerusalem, it does not say, that they were attracted by the wealth, or envious of the greatness, of the Jews: that they came to punish acts of cruel aggression, or the infringement of treaties: that the thirst of insatiable ambition prevailed, even when no such provocations were given; because although all these were causes, they were only subordinate. Sin made God the enemy of the nation. And although the invading adversaries



were their immediate scourge, they were only instrumental. The Agent is far superior. The favour of God is the defence of a country: not their monarchs and counsellors; not their treaties and alliances; not their chariots and horses; not their fortifications and navies—these are usually the *means* employed to support the existence and the prosperity of a country—but security rises from an higher source, and is preserved by divine and constant superintendence.

“ *The Lord shall bring* A NATION against thee—not a tribe, an army, a petty state, but a more powerful, a more terrible engine—a nation. When he will work, he can never lack instruments. The hearts of all men, and the forces of all kingdoms are at his disposal. He who sometimes calls the locusts in swarms that darken the heavens and cover the earth, by the same word of power, when he chooses to punish with the sword, rouses the imperious hero to his contention, bows the haughty necks of kings to his yoke—and “a nation” rises, as with the heart of one man, to “avenge the Lord, and to ease him of his adversaries.”

“ *The Lord shall bring a nation against thee* FROM FAR—What is distance to him, before whom “every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low—the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough



“places plain?”—When it is his purpose to raise up one nation to punish another, intervening mountains, and forests, and seas, and continents are nothing. The Alps stretched between them, formed no defence to the people threatened, and were no impediment to the invaders. We apprehend danger near at hand; but human foresight seldom extends to that which is remote. Here a nation is brought “*from far*.” We do not always see the quarter from which destruction menaces us. The cloud may gather in the other hemisphere which is destined to rise and darken this—when it just emerges to our horizon, it appears above it “as a man’s hand” in size and insignificance: every moment it becomes darker, wider, more portentous, till the heavens are overspread, and the tempest beats upon us without pity. This is a most striking and important feature in the prophecy—the Romans lay *very far* from Jerusalem.

——“*From the* END OF THE EARTH.”—It is remarkable that the two great instruments \* of the destruction of the Jews as a nation, should both come, for that purpose, from Great Britain. It is well known, that in those days, Britain was esteemed and denominated “the end of the earth;” and it is probable that under that very

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\* Adrian and Vespasian.



title we are the subject of several prophecies, relating to the kingdom of Christ, and to the spreading of the gospel. The soldiers of Cæsar were unwilling to follow him, to the conquest of this country; because they imagined that he was passing over the limits of the world. Could these men now be called from those graves in which they have slept more than eighteen centuries to witness the grandeur, the power, the glory of Britain: could they behold this little empire opposing, with her single strength, confederate nations, and in herself becoming the preponderance in the balance of the world; could they see her attracting, as to a centre, religion and science, and again distributing her collected rays of light, and truth, and life, to other—even the most distant lands—what would be their astonishment!

—“*As swift as* THE EAGLE FLIETH.—The eagle was the Roman standard. As an image, the eagle is the emblem of strength, of beauty, of celerity, and of majesty. Such a figure shadowed forth with singular felicity the distinguished characteristics of their conquerors. What withstood their arms? What opposed successfully their power? What resisted their progress? What subdued their valour? The ensign of Rome was planted in every quarter of the world, and in the heart of Jerusalem: “the abo-



“mination of desolation” was set up in the very bosom of it’s sanctuary. The flight of the eagle was an apt and forcible representation of the rapidity of their conquests: and on more occasions than one, the proud boast of their imperial commander, was more than an empty vaunt—“I came—I saw—I conquered!”—

——“*A nation, whose TONGUE thou shalt NOT UNDERSTAND.*”--Again, the correspondence of the prophecy with the event is striking: and again the application of it to the Romans is confirmed. Is it not singular that Moses should represent the destroyers of the Jewish nation, a remote people, of strange language? Is it not an irresistible evidence that he was inspired? Had his language been founded upon mere conjecture, he would rather have supposed and affirmed, that their envious, jealous, powerful neighbours, would combine to destroy them—this was the more likely position. Had he designed only to terrify them by threatenings, while this last conjecture would have been built upon the broader basis of probability, it would have better answered this purpose: because the representation of an adversary near at hand, would have been more terrible, than the prediction of one more remote. Had he not been inspired to develope futurity, he never would have sup-



posed that the Jews were to fall, in case of disobedience, by a distant, and not by a neighbouring, power. But the question is placed beyond all doubt, by the fact: and hypothesis is rendered nugatory by the exact accomplishment of the prophecy.

V. 58.—“ *A nation of FIERCE COUNTENANCE.*—Who is not reminded of the language of Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, when he assisted the Tarentines, before the first Punic war? After a battle, in which he was victorious, and the Romans were defeated, he walked in the field crimsoned by human blood: and when he saw the wounds of the Romans all in front, and marked the fierceness of their countenance preserved even in death; he exclaimed, that “if he had  
“ such soldiers, or if he were their commander, he  
“ would subdue the whole world,” adding, that  
“ such another victory would ruin him.” And here, before they were a people at all, they were expressly described “a nation of *fierce countenance.*”

——“ *Which shall NOT REGARD the person of the OLD, nor shew favour to the YOUNG.*—Another, and an horrible trait, of the Roman character, in their vindictive treatment of the Jews. The spirit of the Romans was a haughty, martial spirit: but I apprehend there can be furnished no parallel in their history, and in their conduct



towards other nations, of that inflexible, unrelenting, indiscriminate cruelty, which they exercised towards the Jews. Titus, under whom the prediction received it's full accomplishment, was mild, humane, and benevolent: the grateful history of his own times, and of those immediately succeeding, has embalmed his memory for posterity: but he seems, beloved as he was by his soldiers, at that moment to have lost all his authority: he could neither restrain the fury of the military against the wretched inhabitants of the city, nor preserve the temple from the flames kindled within it's sacred walls by their blind and senseless rage; and he himself seems to have forgotten his usual clemency, and to have sacrificed, in that singular instance, his very humanity to resentment, in the dreadful number of crucifixions, which he either commended or allowed, of the Jews which fell into his hands. The tears of innocence, the beauty of youth, the softness of female excellence, and the hoary head, were equally anavailing: and the strokes of mortality were dealt around with indiscriminate barbarity. What a fearful destroyer is man, when he is resigned to the impulse of his depraved passions! The most gentle and amiable dispositions, thus given over, become fierce, vindictive, untractable, and pitiless. It is a distinguished mercy to be delivered from ourselves:



it is an unspeakable consolation to “fall into  
“the hands of God,” and not to lie at the mercy  
of an imperious fellow-worm!

V. 51.—“*And he shall eat the fruit of thy  
“cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be  
“destroyed: which also shall not leave thee either  
“corn, wine, or oil, or the increase of thy kine,  
“or flocks of thy sheep, until he have destroyed  
“thee.*” The blessings and the bounties of pro-  
vidence are little esteemed, till they are with-  
held. We plant, and sow, and increase, and eat  
the fruit of our labours—but how seldom we are  
affected by these mercies at the moment, or  
cherish the remembrance of them afterwards!  
Should we not feel lively gratitude, when the  
harvest is brought in, that an enemy has not  
been permitted to lay waste our fruitful fields,  
and to empurple our plains with our own blood?  
What hand secures and feeds us? And why are  
we not in the condition of those Jews, who  
planted, but eat not of the fruit of their vine-  
yards; who sowed, but reaped not; who la-  
boured, not for their families, but for a cruel  
and merciless foe? When shall we be wise, and  
understand these things? Our bread has been  
given us, and our water has been sure. The  
drought has not consumed our corn, nor famine  
wasted our stores. The pestilence has not de-  
populated our cities, nor the sword stained our



soil with the crimson current of human life. He hath not so dealt with other nations. War has raved round us on every side: but its very sound has died away at the foot of our native cliffs. Here, the throne of despotism has been reared upon the ruins of liberty, and upon multitudes slain: there, the earth has refused to repay the toil of the husbandman. In this empire, war ravages its towns and its plantations: in that, the malignant fever shakes its desolating scourge over the wasted people. O Britain, “forget not all thy benefits!” Whose heart does not overflow with joy and thankfulness this night, when he contrasts the situation of his menaced but tranquil country, with the representations of this passage, and with the condition of the nations by which she is surrounded?

V. 52.—“*And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land: and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, throughout all thy land which the Lord thy God hath given thee.*” At the time when this prophecy was delivered, Israel was not in possession of Canaan: for Moses never passed Jordan, nor set foot in the promised land. The Jews had no cities, no gates, no high and fenced walls, nothing to excite their confidence, or to answer the outline of the prediction. It related



altogether to things which did not then exist; and which, so far as mere human foresight was concerned, might never be. But the event justified the prophecy. Jerusalem was a fortified place of prodigious strength: it became the boast of the Jews; and at the time to which the passage alludes was taken with so much difficulty, that Titus acknowledged it would have been impracticable had not God fought against the city. In former periods of their history it was very formidable: but sin undermines the strongest fortifications; and it was repeatedly wasted as a punishment to its inhabitants. When the arm of God is with a nation, “one shall chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight:” when the arm of God is against an empire, vain is their strength, and vain are their resources: “they shall flee when no one pursueth”—they shall be chased as the down of the thistle before the whirlwind.

V. 53. “*And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters (which the Lord thy God hath given thee) in the siege and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee.*”—Unnatural as this representation may appear, it was literally accomplished. Ah, little do we know, surrounded as we are by plenty, what are the horrors of famine, and to what extremities hu-



man nature may be driven. I recollect it is one of the just, but horrible pictures of famine, in the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah, that "every man shall eat the flesh of his own arm;" and there do not want instances that answer the description. One circumstance, unparalleled in the annals of human affliction, 'take it for all 'in all,' is related by Josephus, when he recorded the siege to which Moses seems directly to refer: a case so full of cruelty, a violation of the feelings of nature so extraordinary, an act from the perpetration of which imagination revolts with so much horror, that he not only relates it with reluctance, but affirms he would not have related it at all, because he could not expect to be believed, had there not survived, at the moment when he gave his history to the world, many respectable persons who could attest it. A woman of high consideration, who therefore exactly corresponded with the description of Moses, slew her own child with a design to eat him. What must have been a mother's sufferings, before she was impelled to such an act! She dressed the body in secret, lest her neighbours, urged by famine, should break in upon her, and deprive her by force of her unnatural food. The smell of flesh dressed could not, however, be suppressed; her house was actually forced by her neighbours: but



when they saw the mangled body of the child half-devoured, and understood, that, driven to desperation, a mother's hand had committed this atrocious outrage upon nature, horror subdued even the force of famine, and having stood a few dreadful moments suspended in fear, they withdrew, and left her to complete her barbarous meal alone! But so was it predicted: "The  
 " tender and delicate woman among you, which  
 " would not adventure to set the sole of her  
 " foot upon the ground, for delicateness and  
 " tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the  
 " husband of her bosom, and toward her son,  
 " and toward her daughter, and toward her  
 " children which she shall bear, for she shall  
 " *eat them*, for want of all things, *secretly*, in  
 " the siege, and straitness wherewith thine  
 " enemy shall distress thee in thy gates;" and with this horrible picture we will close the affecting scene of Jewish DESOLATION.

The succeeding part of the prophecy applies to,

II. THE DISPERSION OF THE JEWS; and to their sufferings in that state; the state in which they continue to this hour.

V. 64. " *And the Lord God shall scatter thee*  
 " *among all people from the one end of the earth*  
 " *even unto the other.*" — This circumstance forms a powerful sanction to the determination



with which we commenced this Lecture, to consider the prophecy only in reference to one event and to one people: for although in preceding captivities they were partially scattered abroad, yet this dispersion was never universal and permanent, the fixed characters of it in this passage, till “the Romans came, and took away “their place and nation.” But then the Lord visited the sins of the fathers upon their children, whose personal and transcendent guilt filled the measure of their iniquities as a people; and all the righteous blood which had been shed from Abel to Christ, came upon that generation. They were driven from Jerusalem in all directions; and to this hour have never been allowed to inhabit their metropolis: nor can even the outline of their city be traced with any degree of accuracy. Their country is in the hands of their enemies; very few Jews are permitted to remain in it, and those are aliens, for they have no possessions there. While it is overrun with Turks, Greeks, Christians, Moors, and Arabians; the original proprietors of this wasted track are dispersed in the East, in Europe, in Africa, in the West Indies, among all nations, and literally “from the one “end of the earth even unto the other.”

“*And then thou shalt serve other gods, which  
“neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even*



*“ wood and stone.”* Persecution for conscience sake, and compulsive worship, are manifestly the features of this threatening; whatever humiliating circumstances are particularly intended, as they are expressed only in general terms, we do not presume to insist upon facts beyond the general outline of the prediction. In Spain and Portugal they have severely suffered on this account; and to save themselves from the fire, they have been compelled both to renounce, in those countries, the religion of their fathers, and to bow before the images of the Saints; which we, as well as they, deem idolatry. They dare not even secretly practise the seal of circumcision, for fear of possible discovery.\* There are no Jews there, because there are none that dare avow themselves such. *“ In vain”* (says an able writer †) *“ the great lords of Spain make alliances, change their names, and take ancient scutcheons, they are still known to be of Jewish race, and Jews themselves. The convents of monks and nuns are full of them. Most of the canons, inquisitors, and bishops proceed from this nation ‡.”* Such has been the fact; the recent changes on the continent may

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\* Anc. Univ. Hist. vol. x. chap. ii. p. 73. Note G.

† Limboret. ‡ See Bp. Newton, vol. I. Dissert. vii. p. 108.



enable them to remove this disgusting veil of hypocrisy.

Gibbon has related, with his wonted force and eloquence, a terrible persecution which they endured in Spain, on account of religion, so early as the seventh century, under “Sisebut, “a Gothic king. Ninety thousand Jews were “compelled to receive the sacrament of baptism; the fortunes of the obstinate infidels “were confiscated, their bodies tortured; and “it seems doubtful whether they were permitted to abandon their native country. The “excessive zeal of the catholic king was moderated, even by the clergy of Spain, who solemnly pronounced an inconsistent sentence: “*that* the sacraments should not be forcibly “imposed; but *that* the Jews who had been “baptized should be constrained for the honour” (read the *dishonour*) “of the church, to persevere in the external practice of a religion “which they disbelieved and detested. Their “frequent relapses provoked one of the successors of Sisebut to banish the whole nation “from his dominions; and a council of Toledo “published a decree, that every Gothic king “should swear to maintain this salutary edict. “But the tyrants were unwilling to dismiss the “victims, whom they delighted to torture; or “to deprive themselves of the industrious



“ slaves, over whom they might exercise a lu-  
 “ crative oppression. The Jews still continued  
 “ in Spain, under the weight of the civil and  
 “ ecclesiastical laws, which in the same coun-  
 “ try have been faithfully transcribed in the  
 “ code of the *Inquisition*. The Gothic kings  
 “ and bishops at length discovered, that inju-  
 “ ries will produce hatred, and that hatred will  
 “ find the opportunity of revenge. A nation,  
 “ the secret or professed enemies of Christian-  
 “ ity, *still multiplied in servitude and distress*;  
 “ and the intrigues of the Jews promoted the  
 “ rapid success of the Arabian conquerors\*.”

V. 65.—“ *And among these nations thou shalt*  
 “ *find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot*  
 “ *have rest.*” Besides the storm of persecution  
 which we have just recalled to your recollection,  
 in the thirteenth century they were banished  
 from England: in the fourteenth from France;  
 in the fifteenth again from Spain; afterwards  
 from Portugal; and still more recently from  
 Bohemia. It had been said in the twenty-  
 ninth verse of this chapter—“ thou shalt be  
 “ only oppressed, and *spoiled* evermore.” With-  
 out looking further, the history of our own  
 country will furnish us with some terrible ex-  
 amples of their oppressions, both in respect of

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\* Gibbon's Rome, Vol. VI. chap. xxxvii. p. 303, 304. 8vo. edit.



their persons and their property. Richard the first, whose reign was what the world calls glorious, but whose chief excellence was personal valour, sullied by a variety of bad qualities; was proud and vindictive; and his government oppressive and arbitrary. The Jews felt the weight of these evils in an extraordinary measure. He forbade them to appear at his coronation; and because some, in confidence of the presents which they had made him, presumed to disobey, a general massacre of the Jews commenced by the populace, which if he did not command, he took no trouble to restrain. From London the persecuting spirit fled through other cities; and in York, “ five hundred of that nation, who had retired into the castle for safety, and found themselves unable to defend the place, murdered their own wives and children, threw the dead bodies over the walls upon the populace, and then setting fire to the houses perished in the flames\*.” In the weak and turbulent reign of John, a character infamous for cowardice, for oppression, and for murder, whose life is a stain to the English history, but from whose hand liberty wrested her celebrated charter, the oppressions of the Jews were renewed, and were directed immediately

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\* Hume's *England*, Vol. II. chap. x. p. 178, 179. 12mo. edit.



towards their property. One of our best historians says, that they “were intirely out of the  
 “protection of the law, were extremely odious  
 “to the bigotry of the people, and were abandoned to the immeasurable rapacity of the  
 “king and of his ministers. Besides many  
 “other indignities to which they were continually exposed, it appears that they were once  
 “all thrown into prison, and the sum of 66,000  
 “marks exacted for their liberty. At different  
 “times, from five Jews only, was extorted, by  
 “this tyrant, 16,600 marks.” In the succeeding reign of Henry the Third, whose incapacity for government was at least equalled by his rapacity towards the Jews, this unhappy people were repeatedly spoiled and destroyed—“The  
 “king borrowed 5000 marks of the earl of  
 “Cornwall, and for his repayment consigned  
 “over to him all the Jews in England:” but I am weary of reciting evidences so plainly illustrative of that cruel treatment which Moses foretold in their dispersion\*. At one time, in the reign of Edward the First, “no less than 15,000  
 “of them were robbed of their effects, and banished the kingdom†.” A still more terrible calamity overtook them in different countries

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\* See Hume's England, Vol. II. Appendix, 2, p. 319. Vol. III. chap. i. p. 61, 62—90 and 91.

† Ditto, p. 101—103.



and at different times, but especially in Spain and Portugal, where religious toleration is not known, and where the Jews have always suffered most severely, they have not been suffered to have the education of their own children, who were taken from them, and brought up in monasteries to which their parents could have no access. This also had been foretold (v. 32.) “Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given  
“unto another people, and thine eyes shall look,  
“and fail with longing for them all the day  
“long.” Such were their various oppressions: but the prophet now turns their eyes upon their anguish of spirit.

——“*But the Lord shall give thee there a  
“trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow  
“of mind.*” What a terrible picture is here of the visitations of the Almighty, when he makes requisition for sin! He can not only seal up the springs of external comfort, but eclipse the sunshine of the spirit with ten thousand nameless apprehensions. “It is a fearful thing to fall  
“into the hands of the living God!” “A trembling heart!”—what an evil! Disease may yield to the power of medicine: but who, besides himself, can heal the spirit which God has wounded? Calamity is usually confined to time, and death is a shelter from the roughest day: but this is a sorrow which passes the limits of life, and the palsy of terror rages with increas-



ing violence, as the present turbulent scene hastens to close, because, dying under divine displeasure, a more terrible, and an unalterable state of being, commences. Follow yonder smitten rebel, who carries the arrows of God every where rankling in his conscience ! He droops even while he is encompassed by the blessings of life, a prey to tormenting reflections, to the scorpion stings of self-accusation, to the multiplying terrors of despair. His cheek grows pale, his eye waxes dim, his body wastes, his strength melts away, under the pressure of a disease which art cannot reach, a disease the seat of which is in his heart. This is the delineation of Moses, this was the lot of the Jews in many affecting instances : do you shudder at the scenery ? Take heed to yourselves ! the same artillery is still planted against the head of guilt, and a punishment no less terrible awaits present rebellion, although perhaps unseen, and future in it's execution. “ He that being often  
 “ reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly  
 “ be destroyed, and that without remedy.”

V. 56.—“ *And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee ; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life.*” God rides in the whirlwind, and directs the tempest. The ball, that is discharged from yonder cloud fraught with electricity, is overruled by the un-



erring hand of heaven, and obeys its destination to smite the desert or the city, the mountain or the spire, the house, or the tree, or the traveller that seeks a shelter under it. With God at our right hand, amid the changes of life, or the terrors of death, we shall not be greatly moved. When his inspiring presence is withdrawn, in vain we seek repose, and woo prosperity. A curse follows us into the city and into the field; at home and abroad; into our families and into our possessions; in all that we have, and all that we perform. Thus are these deserted people exhibited as having “none assurance of their lives.” You have already seen, what just reason they had to fear, from their frequent sufferings. Josephus estimates, that one million, two hundred and forty thousand, four hundred and ninety, perished at once in Jerusalem and in Judea.

Ver. 67.—“*In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see!*” A lively picture of restless agony! A moving description of feelings which must necessarily arise out of their desolate and precarious circumstances! It was announced “thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a by-



“ word, among all nations whither the Lord  
 “ shall lead thee.” I need not remind you that these words are faithful and true. They are subjects of constant derision to one part of the community, and of disgust to others. Their very persons are deemed odious ; and every evil and unworthy passion is ascribed to them, from the most insatiable avarice to the most inflexible hardness of heart. If we wish to fix a stigma upon a man’s character, it is only necessary to say, “ he is a Jew,” and society will feel the reproach, and be ready to brand all his transactions. They are objects of compassion, and subjects for your prayers : sin lies at the root of their degradation ; and even now they have not lost all the impress of God’s hand-writing. Let the complaint, extorted by misery, be a lesson to the children of prosperity, who sometimes use correspondent language from the mere lassitude of indolence : should God shower his plagues upon them, as he has done formerly upon this devoted people, they would feel the misery which at present they mock with their murmurings.

V. 68.—“ *And the Lord shall bring thee into  
 “ Egypt again with ships, by the way whereof I  
 “ spake unto thee, thou shalt see it no more again :  
 “ and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for  
 “ bond-men and for bond-women, and no man shall*



“*buy you.*” Perhaps this intends that their sufferings should be as oppressive as their former Egyptian bondage, and even be attended by cruelties more aggravating. But from the best authorities we collect enough to be persuaded that this point of the prophecy also received a literal accomplishment. It is probable that a large proportion of them were carried thither by the Romans, who had a fleet in the Mediterranean \*. It is certain, from the testimony of Josephus, that at the command of Titus many were thus transported; and so little were they esteemed, that eleven thousand of them were suffered to perish with want †. Such was the glut of the market, that thirty Jews were offered for sale for one small piece of money; and even then sometimes purchasers could not be found.

Such were the predictions of their distinguished Lawgiver respecting the desolation and the dispersion of the Jews, predictions re-echoed by all their prophets in succession, and which, upon the testimony of impartial history have been so completely accomplished. We ask you to review the representations of this evening,

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\* Newton on the Proph. vol. i. Dissert. 7. p. 102.

† Jos. Bell. Jud. lib. vi. c. 9, &c. p. 1291. See also the note at the end.



and to say whether their present existence and population, in circumstances of such singular disadvantage, and through so long a period, of such singular oppression, among all nations, can be deemed less than a standing miracle, demonstrating the superintendence of providence, the faith of prophecy, and by deduction, the truth and the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures? At the close of so many years from their dispersion, and in defiance of such cruel measures employed against them, “one million are  
 “supposed to be resident in the various provinces of Turkey, three hundred thousand in  
 “Persia, India, and China, and seventeen hundred thousand in Europe, Africa, and America. Their outward condition and circumstances are generally tolerable, except in Portugal and Spain \*.” And it is now probable that the hand of persecution will be stayed even in those countries, from the policy hitherto pursued by that power to which those empires are at present likely to be subjected.

God had said, that he “would not destroy  
 “them utterly,” even in their lowest estate, nor “break his covenant with them:” and their distinction from all people forms a leading feature in their dispersion and preservation. It

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\* Kett on Proph. vol. i. chap. iv. p. 120. Note.



is the distinction of nature, as well as of habits and circumstances. Nor is this less miraculous than their preservation itself. The laborious and pious Prelate, who has poured so much light upon this subject and upon prophecy at large, argues here with his wonted plainness and conviction. “ No people have continued unmixed  
“ so long as they have done, not only of those  
“ who have sent forth colonies into foreign  
“ countries, but even of those who have abided  
“ in their own country. The northern nations  
“ have come in swarms into the more southern  
“ parts of Europe; but where are they now to  
“ be discerned and distinguished? The Gauls  
“ went forth in great bodies to seek their for-  
“ tune in foreign parts; but what traces or  
“ footsteps of them are now remaining any  
“ where? In France, who can separate the race  
“ of the ancient Gauls from the various other  
“ people who from time to time have settled  
“ there? In Spain, who can distinguish exactly  
“ between the first possessors, the Spaniards,  
“ the Goths, and the Moors, who conquered  
“ and kept possession of the country for some  
“ ages? In England, who can pretend to say  
“ with certainty, which families are derived  
“ from the ancient Britons, and which from the  
“ Romans, or Saxons, or Danes, or Normans?  
“ The most ancient and honourable pedigrees



“ can be traced up only to a certain period, and  
 “ beyond that there is nothing but conjecture  
 “ and uncertainty, obscurity and ignorance:  
 “ but the Jews can go up higher than any nation,  
 “ they can even deduce their pedigree from the  
 “ beginning of the world. They may not  
 “ know from what particular tribe or family  
 “ they are descended, but they know certainly  
 “ that they all sprang from the stock of Abra-  
 “ ham. And yet the contempt with which they  
 “ have been treated, and the hardships which  
 “ they have undergone in almost all countries,  
 “ should, one would think, have made them  
 “ desirous to forget or renounce their original:  
 “ but they profess it, they glory in it: and  
 “ after so many wars, massacres, and persecu-  
 “ tions, they still subsist;” they subsist in the  
 full evidence of distinction—“ they still are  
 “ very numerous: and what but a supernatural  
 “ power,” *constantly*, and *still* exerted, “ could  
 “ have preserved them in such a manner as  
 “ none other nation upon earth hath been pre-  
 “ served \*?” and in such circumstances as no  
 other nation upon earth hath ever been plac-  
 ed?

The Jews are thus distinguished and pre-  
 served for better times. Jesus is sent not merely

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\* Bp. Newton on the Proph. vol. i. Dissert. viii. p. 118, 119.



“ for the fall,” but also “ for the rising again  
“ of Israel.” The fullness of the Gentiles and the  
gathering in of the Jews shall arrive together;  
“ and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.”  
O ye wandering, dispersed children of Abra-  
ham! we pity your low estate! we long to in-  
fold you in the arms of Christian communion!  
we anticipate, we wait, and we pray for the day  
when ye shall “ turn again to your strong hold:”  
“ when ye shall look upon him whom ye have  
“ pierced, and mourn:” when ye shall say,  
“ Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the  
“ Lord!” “ O that the salvation of Israel were  
“ come out of Zion! when God bringeth back  
“ the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice,  
“ and Israel shall be glad!”



## NOTES.

## NOTES TO THE SEVENTH LECTURE.

IN confirmation of that which has been advanced in the preceding Lecture, are the following extracts from Josephus: τὰς γὰρ δημοτικὰς καταλιπόντες μόνους, τὸν ἄλλον ὄχλον ἐπώλυν συν γυναιξὶ καὶ τέκνοις, ἐλαχίστης τιμῆς ἑκάστον, πλήθει τε τῶν πιπρασκομένων, καὶ ὀλιγότῃ τῶν ὠνευμένων. καὶ περὶ δὲ προκηρύξας μηδένα μόνον αὐτομολεῖν, ὅπως καὶ γενεὰς ἐξαγάγοιεν, ὅμως καὶ τέττας ἐδέχετο. ἐπέσκησε μὲν τοι τὰς διακρινῆναι ἀπ' αὐτῶν, εἴ τις εἴη κολάσεως ἄξιος. καὶ τῶν μὲν ἀπεμποληθέντων ἀπείρον τὸ πλῆθος ἦν.—“ Leaving only the common people, they sold the rest, with their wives and children, for an inconsiderable price, on account of the *multitudes exposed to sale*, and the *paucity of buyers*, although he had issued an edict, that none should flee to him singly, intending thereby to obtain also their families, yet he received these also, appointing some to inquire who were worthy of punishment, and to inflict it on them, *and an infinite multitude were sold.*” *Joseph. de Bello Jud. lib. vi. cap. 8. sect. 2. p. 1288. Hud. edit.* What a striking illustration of the prophecy—“ Ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, “ and no man shall buy you.” Of their transmission to Egypt, the indignities they suffered, and the immense slaughter of the captive Jews, he says, ὁ δὲ τὰς μὲν σλασιώδεις καὶ ληστρικὰς πάντας, ὑπ' ἀλλήλων ἐνδεικνυμένους, ἀπέκτεινε· τῶν δὲ νέων τὰς ὑψηλοτάτας καὶ καλὰς ἐπιλέξας ἐτήρει τῷ θρίαμβῳ· τὰ δὲ λοιπὰ πλῆθος τὰς ὑπὲρ ἐπτακαίδεκα ἔτη δῆσας ἐπεμψεν εἰς τὰ κατ' Αἰγυπτίον ἔργα, πλείους δ' εἰς τὰς ἐπαρχίας διεδωρήσατο Τίτος, φθαρησομένους ἐν τοῖς θεάτροις σιδήρῳ καὶ θηρίοις. οἱ δ' ἐντὸς ἐπτακαίδεκα ἔτων ἐπράθηνσαν. ἐφθάρησαν δ' αὐτῶν ἐν αἷς διέκρινεν ὁ Φρόντων ἡμέραις ὑπ' ἐνδείας, χίλιοι πρὸς τοῖς μυρίοις, οὗ



μὲν ὑπὸ μίσθῃ τῶν φυλάκων μὴ μεταλαμβάνοντες τροφῆς, οἱ δ' ἔτι προσ-  
 ἰέμενοι διδομένην. πρὸς δὲ τὸ πλῆθος ἦν ἔνδεια καὶ σίτις. “ All the sedi-  
 tious and the robbers, who were betrayed by mutual treachery, he  
 slew: but certain chosen youths, who excelled the rest in stature  
 and in beauty of configuration, he reserved to grace the triumph.  
 The whole remaining multitude, above 17 years of age, he sent  
 bound into Egypt as slaves for hard labour. Titus also dispersed  
 many of them through the provinces to be destroyed by the sword,  
 or by wild beasts, in the theatres. Those who were under seventeen  
 years were sold. During the time they were under the controul of  
 Fronto, 12,000 died of hunger, partly from the hatred of their  
 keepers, who gave them nothing to eat, partly that some refused  
 food when it was offered them; and indeed there was now a scarcity  
 of provision, because of the multitude.”

*Jos. Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 9. sect. 2. p. 1291. Hud. edit.*

In summing up the whole loss, he says, Τῶν μὲν ἐν αἰχμαλώτων  
 πάντων, ὅσα καθ' ὅλον ἐλήφθη τὸν πόλεμον, ἀριθμὸς ἐννέα μυριάδες καὶ  
 ἑπτακισχίλιοι συνήχθη· τῶν δ' ἀπολεμένων κατὰ πᾶσαν τὴν πολιορκίαν,  
 μυριάδες εκατὸν καὶ δέκα. “ The number of captives taken during the  
 time of the whole war, was ninety-seven thousand; but of all that  
 perished during the time of the intire siege, eleven millions.”

*Jos. Bell. Jud. lib. vi, cap. 9. sect. 3. p. 1291. Hud. edit.*



## LECTURE VIII.

PROPHECIES RESPECTING BABYLON, TYRE, THE  
FORMER AND THE PRESENT STATE OF EGYPT.

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ISAIAH XIII. 19—22.

*And BABYLON the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there, neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall be there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures, and owls shall dwell there, and Satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged.*

EZEK. XXVI. 3—6. *Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I am against thee, O TYRUS, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up. And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers; I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord*



*God, and it shall become a spoil to the nations. And her daughters which are in the field shall be slain by the sword, and they shall know that I am the Lord.*

EZEK. XXIX. 14, 15. *I will bring again the captivity of EGYPT, and will cause them to return into the land of Pathros, into the land of their habitation, and they shall be there a base kingdom. It shall be the basest of the kingdoms, neither shall it exalt itself any more among the nations: for I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations.*

**BY** many laborious and learned researches, the truth of this volume has been proved, it's antiquity demonstrated, and it's claims to inspiration established. Amidst the mass of evidence furnished by science yielding her treasures to the great and good cause of religion; and while the weight of solid literature has in a variety of instances been roused to crush the feeble, superficial, imposing objections of modern scepticism, which rather wishes the volume it opposes not to be true, than hopes to prove it false; a few plain considerations may be produced to advantage by inferior talents, and those perhaps more satisfactory to a plain understanding, because better comprehended, than more laborious investigation. The pretensions of modern philosophy, and the virulent but vain attacks which have been made, at the close of the eighteenth, and the commencement of the nineteenth centu-



ries, upon the divinity of Christianity, have produced a most beneficial effect: they have excited the efforts of men of different powers, have placed the invincible evidences of revealed religion in all their various lights and bearings, and have convinced the unprejudiced that there is no reason why the hearts of those concerned for the sanctuary should tremble for the ark of God. In presuming to put forth our hand to stay it amid the rude assaults by which the malignity of man has attempted to shake it, not with the temerity of Uzzah, but impelled by a sense of official duty, we have never professed to do more than to endeavour to render plain those able arguments which are sometimes either difficult of access, or difficult to understand; and to strike out from the various subjects such practical inferences as may be useful and instructive.

Imagine then, a number of men combining to palm upon the world a volume which they wish to be received as something more than of human composition. They would be anxious to adorn it with every possible attraction; and they would not merely aim at regularity, but endeavour to polish it into the most perfect symmetry. It would never occur to them to mingle history, legislation, prophecy, poetry, and epistolary compositions in such a production. They



would be afraid of crushing their scheme by destroying it's unity ; and of exposing their design by the absence of that, which in human estimation is harmony and proportion. In effect they must fail, without the most perfect co-operation, when it is scarcely credible they should attain even momentary success with it; and such a production would be totally dissimilar to all the characteristics of the scriptures. The various branches of the inspired writings, and their great difference of style and of circumstances prove that they were not the composition of one man, or of any body of men at one time, or even in any one age. Besides the external evidences deducible from history and chronology, it is manifest from the book itself, that it was written at different times, in different languages, under different circumstances, and by men who were so far removed from each other that they had not even the opportunity of collusion.

The same may be said of the New Testament, which infidelity accuses of being framed out of the materials of the ancient Jewish writings. Had the Apostles desired to seduce the world by a scheme so nefarious, and had an handful of uneducated men been capable of doing it, they also would have aimed at systematic and regular composition. Not to say that any at-



tempt on their part to build a fictitious tale upon the basis of obscure predictions must have been frustrated and defeated by their contemporaries: not to urge that the forgery might have been easily detected and exposed, because every man was adequate to prove or to disprove a question which turned upon matter of fact: every man knew at the time, whether there was such a character as Jesus Christ, and whether the succession of circumstances related of him did really take place—to wave this argument, the nature of the composition itself proves the imputed imposition impossible. Whoever should have attempted it must have betrayed in their writings incessant efforts at consistency: or have made the several parts of their production so incongruous, that their falsehood would have been detected by want of that unity which is essential to truth, however various and even dissimilar the forms in which it is produced and stated. There must have been an uniformity too exact, or too little agreement. But the Scriptures bear all the marks of composition by different writers, with sufficient harmony to prove their analogy with, and their dependance upon, each other; and sufficient diversity to establish the impossibility of deception.

The same mode of reasoning will apply to the subject immediately in hand—prophecy.



If the events insisted upon, as agreeing with these predictions, had been forged, it would have been easy to have made them correspond, as it appears to our judgment, more intirely: or if, as some have intimated, contrary to the most decisive evidence, the professed prophecies had been framed out of historical events after they had taken place, then had it been reasonable to suppose that the impostor would have made the oracle more luminous, and those obscurities which now occasionally perplex us had not existed. There is a sufficient correspondence between the prediction and it's historical fact to identify their respective analogy; and sufficient obscurity to determine that the prophecy was indeed written before the event, and that it formed a part of the divine plan, to make the history the only satisfactory solution of the prediction.

The PROPHECIES which form the subject of discussion for this evening relate to BABYLON, TYRE, THE FORMER AND THE PRESENT STATE OF EGYPT: and we shall take them up in the order in which they have been announced.

### I. BABYLON.

At the time when Isaiah wrote those singular and affecting words which are to pass under review in the course of this Lecture, Babylon was not a declining, decaying state, but a mighty



empire, every day augmenting it's resources, enlarging it's dominion, adding to it's energies, and rising into more marked distinction. To judge from it's situation, at the moment when the prophecy was pronounced, and long afterward, human reason and foresight would have pronounced it's increasing greatness, and not it's utter ruin. It did not attain the summit of it's glory till more than a century afterward; for such is the distance of time between Hezekiah, in whose reign this prediction was delivered, and Nebuchadnezzar, under whose auspices Babylon reached the utmost point of her prosperity. But the doom, thus proclaimed before she had touched the zenith of her dignity, was repeated by Isaiah, reiterated by succeeding prophets, reechoed in the ears of Nebuchadnezzar himself, by Daniel, when he was called to interpret some singular revelations which God had been pleased to make to this monarch. Immediately succeeding the passage which is now to employ your thoughts, a most eloquent and inimitable triumph over this vast empire is put into the mouth of Israel: the very cedars and fir trees of Lebanon share the universal joy which is anticipated; and by one of those bold and striking personifications to be found in their full beauty only in the Scriptures, are represented raising the anthem at the fall of it's king.



“ The whole earth is at rest and is quiet; they  
“ break forth into singing. Yea, the fir trees  
“ rejoice at thee, and the cedars of Lebanon,  
“ saying, since thou art laid down no feller is  
“ come up against us.” It would be a delightful occupation to follow this beautiful description, carried on with unrivalled felicity, throughout; the agitation and commotion of the invisible world at his approach; the great men, once the kings of the earth, now the shadows of their former selves, exhibiting a gratification that he who outstripped their majesty now shares their weakness; the contrast between his former grandeur, and his present degradation; between his boasting and his ruin; the just visitation of his acts upon his own head; and the righteous dispensation of God in overwhelming the waster with utter desolation; every thing relating to this whole master-piece of composition, whether imagery or sentiment, dignity of conception or force of expression, is inimitable; and the entire passage would amply repay an enlarged examination of its excellencies, but that it belongs to another department than Lectures on Scripture-Prophecy to point out beauties of style, and would lead us too far from the immediate object of our present meeting\*.

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\* See Is. xiv. 4—20.



When Babylon had attained her height of power and renown, the visions of Nebuchadnezzar admonished him of that termination of this mighty empire which we are now about to contemplate: so that from the commencement of the denunciations against it, to the very period of their completion, the clear and strong representations of prophecy never ceased.

We shall attempt to prove, that the Instruments, the Time, the Method, the Consequences of the event were all distinctly foretold, with it's intire Desolation. Permit us to request your attention to each of these particulars.

I. The INSTRUMENTS by which the ruin of Babylon was to be effected were foretold. The conqueror himself was expressly named, more than a century before his birth. And with no less precision his character is delineated. Xenophon himself, who wrote his history, never exhibited him as an invincible hero in stronger terms than Isaiah. He was to come flushed with conquest to the subjugation of this vast city; and from vanquished nations he was to go up against an empire which had forged chains for all it's neighbours. Accordingly Xenophon enumerates fourteen nations which he either subdued by the force of arms, or which submitted to him, and over which he reigned,



besides Babylon \*. “ Thus saith the Lord to  
 “ his anointed, to *Cyrus*, whose right hand I  
 “ have holden to *subdue nations* †.” And with-  
 out any great exaggeration to increase the pomp  
 of his style, at the head of his decree in favour  
 of the Jews he writes—“ Thus saith Cyrus, king  
 “ of Persia, the Lord God of heaven hath given  
 “ me *all the kingdoms of the earth* ‡.”

It must be admitted that the prediction is sufficiently clear respecting the principal instru-  
 ment: it was no less so respecting those which  
 were subordinate. It was not to be subdued by  
 Medes alone, neither by Persians alone, but both  
 these were to form the destroying army, under  
 one leader. The command was, “ Go up, O  
 “ Elam,” the ancient name of Persia, “ besiege  
 “ O Media.” Cyrus, as king of the Persians,  
 employed his own forces; and the Medes were  
 consigned to his command in this expedition  
 by their monarch, to whom he was related by  
 double ties of consanguinity §.

2. The TIME was determined and described  
 with the same accuracy. It was to take place  
 by night, a night of festivity, a night of riot

\* See Xen. Cyrop. vol. I. lib. i. p. 9. edit. Hutchinson, 12mo.  
 also Note at the end.

† Is. xlv. 1.

‡ Ezra, i. 2.

§ He was his nephew and his son-in-law.



and of intemperance. "Prepare the table, watch in the watch-tower, eat, drink: arise, ye princes and anoint the shield." Thus the monarch, over whom destruction lowered, was to encourage his nobles in the heart of his palace, against the fightings around his city, and the fears within it. Or, as a learned Prelate\* has better rendered the passage—"The table is prepared, the watch is set; they eat, they drink:" in which case the prophet speaks in his own person, and discovers in vision the scenes of that eventful night. But in either translation, not merely the time, but it's circumstances are clearly anticipated. The confusion and terror which seized these sons of riot in the midst of their noise, the commotion which followed the apparition of the handwriting on the wall of the palace, the strong contrast between their mirth and their horror, especially in the person and feelings of the king, are all described with such power by the prophet, as not only to make us share the terror, but almost to imagine him a spectator of the event, which took place when he was sleeping in his grave. "Therefore are my loins filled

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\* Bp. Lowth's Trans. of Is. chap. xxi. v. 5. The verbs are in the infinitive mode absolute. See his notes upon the chapter, pages 120 and 165; on chap. xxxii. 11. of the same prophet, 4to. edit.



“ with pains ; pangs have taken hold upon me  
 “ as the pangs of a woman that travaileth : *I*  
 “ *am convulsed so that I cannot hear : I am*  
 “ *astonished, so that I cannot see.* My heart  
 “ panted, fearfulness affrighted me : the night  
 “ of my pleasure hath he turned into fear unto  
 “ me\*.” Such is the prediction : listen, now,  
 to the history. “ Belshazzar the king made a  
 “ great feast to a thousand of his lords, and  
 “ drank wine before the thousand.” “ They  
 “ drank wine, and praised the gods of gold,  
 “ and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and  
 “ of stone. In the same hour came forth fingers  
 “ of a man’s hand, and wrote over against the  
 “ candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of  
 “ the king’s palace ; and the king saw the part  
 “ of the hand that wrote. Then the king’s  
 “ countenance was changed, and his thoughts  
 “ troubled him, so that the joints of his loins  
 “ were loosed, and his knees smote one against  
 “ another. The king *cried aloud* to bring in the  
 “ astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the sooth-  
 “ sayers †.” And it is remarkable that the si-  
 lence, the dismay, the inability of these very

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\* Is. xxi. 3, 4. The portion of the quotation printed in *italics* is Bp. Lowth’s Translation, which I adopted, because it appeared to me to preserve the unity of the passage better than the common one.

† Dan. v. 1, and 4—7.



men, upon whom he placed so much dependance, to save him, was foretold as clearly as all the other circumstances of the night. “Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels: let now the astrologers, the star-gazers, the monthly prognosticators stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee\*.” The defiance is an assertion of their impotence. The cowardice of the king and of his court, the dismay which turned their faces pale, and oppressed their heart with an agony of terror, contrasted with their blasphemy, their security, and their defiance of God, exhibited but a moment before, demonstrate with astonishing force the slender foundation upon which that proud structure, the confidence of the wicked, is elevated; and should be received as a solemn admonition to those despisers who now behold and wonder, but who will lose all their courage in the day that they perish.

3. The MANNER of the taking of the city was no less clearly predicted. First, the river was to be dried up; God promises, I will say “to the deep, Be dry: and I will dry up the rivers;” and this is declared in reference to “Cyrus,” whom he calls his “shepherd\*.” The way in which this prophecy was accom-

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\* Is. xlvii. 13.

† Is. xlv. 27, 28.



plished in the diversion of the course of the Euphrates, which ran through the city, by the order of Cyrus, has already been stated much at large, on a former occasion\*, and there is the less reason to dwell upon it here. Then, the brazen gates were to be left open. “Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus—I will loose the loins of kings to open before him the two-leaved gates, *and the gates shall not be shut.* I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron†.” But for the oversight of the Babylonians, as Herodotus, who was only acquainted with second causes, said, and we with much more propriety (after a contemplation of this singular prophecy, delivered more than a century before the event) may say, but for the promised interposition of Providence, all must have failed. Had the brazen gates which led to the river been closed, as it was guarded on both its banks by walls of the same height and strength as those which surrounded the city, the drying of the river had been in vain; the Babylonians from their walls might have poured down death in a thousand shapes upon the invaders,

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\* See Lect. on Scripture Facts, p. 462—465.

† Is. xlv. 1, 2.



“ the Persians would have been taken as in a “ net\*,” and none could have escaped. The assault was to be on *two* sides of the city, north and south. It is a wonderful circumstance that the prophecy should descend to particulars so minute. “ One post shall run to *meet another*, “ and one messenger to *meet another*, to shew “ the king of Babylon that his city is *taken at one* “ *end* ;” or, is taken at “ *each end* †.” As Cyrus commanded his troops, not to enter by one passage, but to divide themselves into two equal detachments, to enter the city by each of the sides through which the river passed, and to advance till they met in the centre, when the alarm was taken, it would be equal at the two opposite parts of the city ; each would send a messenger to the palace, and as this was situated in the centre of the city, there they would “ meet each other.” The tumult occasioned by the intelligence which these men brought, almost immediately upon the interpretation which Daniel gave of the vision, caused the death of the King : for when he sent to inquire the cause of the confusion, the moment the palace-doors

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\* Herod. Lib. 1. c. 191. See the note at the end.

† Jer. LI. 31. In this chapter may be found a variety of predictions agreeing with the circumstances foretold by Isaiah ; especially their feasting followed by death, in verse 39.



were open, the troops of Cyrus, who had pressed hard upon the messengers, rushed in, and the monarch, with his nobles, were put to the sword.

4. The CONSEQUENCES of this great event were no less the subject of prophecy. The immediate result of the success of Cyrus was to be the deliverance of the Jews. He was to say “to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the Temple, thy foundation shall be laid.” This was the great design of all that distinction conferred upon him by the Being “through whom Kings reign,” and whose are all the empires of the earth. “For Jacob my servant’s sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.” The express term of Israel’s Captivity, and the very period at which the tyranny of Babylon over surrounding nations, should terminate, was distinctly predicted. “This whole land (Judea and it’s environs) shall be a desolation and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon *seventy* years. And it shall come to pass, when *seventy* years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and



“and will make it perpetual desolations\*.” And precisely at the close of these years, Babylon fell, fell by the hand of Cyrus; and by the benevolence of the same conqueror, Jerusalem rose from the dust.

But there were other consequences to succeed this event, consequences which respected Babylon itself, and which are detailed in the passage upon which this discussion is founded. It was to be a transfer of empire and dominion to other hands; and these decays of power and importance were to issue in utter desolation. The language employed on this point is very particular; it supposes that the event was to be gradually accomplished; but it also decidedly asserts that the empire should never recover the blow which it should receive from Cyrus. In foretelling its ruin, the prophet sets out with a comparison which extinguishes hope respecting any remedy; and the moment the eye is turned upon Sodom and Gomorrah, as a type of this Queen of the Nations, the point is determined, and her end is come—we are prepared for all that follows.

“And Babylon, the glory of Kingdoms, the  
“beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency, shall be as  
“when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.  
“It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be

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\* Jer. xxv. 11, 12.



“ dwelt in from generation to generation.” In this last particular consists the resemblance between this empire and the “ cities of the plain ;” for in respect of the method employed, and the time occupied, to produce the end determined, these two events differed: the one was by the immediate judgments of heaven, the other by human agency: the one was sudden, the other by slow but sure degrees. “ Neither shall the “ Arabian pitch tent there:” it shall be a scene of solitude so terrific, that the tribes accustomed to the barrenness and horrors of the Desert shall shun it—“ neither shall the shepherds “ make their fold there. But wild beasts of the “ desert shall lie there, and their houses shall “ be full of doleful creatures, and owls shall “ dwell there and satyrs shall dance there. And “ the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their “ desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant “ palaces—and her time is near to come, and “ her days shall not be prolonged.” What a contrast is here, to Nebuchadnezzar’s survey of magnificence which made him forget himself a man ; to Belshazzar’s feast, prepared for a thousand lords ; to the population and merchandise, the pursuits and the pleasures of a city far more considerable than this metropolis: in short a more awful picture of the intire destruction of a state was never drawn.



And thus was it effected. The first step to it's ruin was that it ceased to be the seat of empire; the Persian Kings choosing to reside elsewhere. Cyrus also had disarmed the inhabitants, and impoverished them by exactions. When it lost it's dignity as an imperial residence, it was neglected in things essential not merely to it's beauty but to it's preservation: and the Euphrates once diverted from it's course by Cyrus, to enter the city, never recovered it's channel, but formed lakes over the face of the whole country, which stagnated in wide and pestilential marshes. The next step to their desolation was a rebellion against Darius Hystaspes, which was founded in the most desperate cruelty and ended in defeat. After slaying with their own hand, every member of their own community whom they deemed superfluous, because unable to assist in defence of the city—it was taken by stratagem, at the end of one year and eight months. But the Persian Monarch to disable it from any such future insurrection, destroyed it's gates, lowered it's walls, and every way diminished it's strength. The purpose of Alexander in it's favour, to restore it to it's ancient glory and make it again the seat of empire, was frustrated like many of the projects of that ambitious man—by death. From his time, the Macedonians, not only did not attempt to



repair it's ruins, but erected another city, Seleucia, to induce it's inhabitants to abandon it. By little and little this purpose became so completely effected, that nothing was left but it's walls. Four centuries after our Lord, it was made a park for enclosing wild beasts for hunting, by the later kings of Persia. The last that we hear of it from any travellers is, that it was inaccessible on account of the serpents and venomous creatures, that inhabited not only it, but overran the country round about it; and now the very spot where Babylon stood cannot be ascertained.

These are points upon which we cannot be mistaken, because a succession of historians, ancient and modern, have described it's appearance in their own times. It is described by Herodotus, about one hundred and fifty years after the conquest by Cyrus; and even then the hand of desolation had strongly marked it. Diodorus Siculus, about four centuries after Herodotus, said that in his days it was extremely ruinous and nearly deserted. Strabo about six hundred years from the first overthrow of Babylon, calls it a great desert. This is confirmed by succeeding writers to the days of St. Jerome, who speaks of it as an enclosure for wild beasts. Travellers in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and succeeding centuries to the present time, confirm



the account of all that preceded them—till it became impossible to fix upon the spot with any degree of accuracy.

Thus fell Babylon ; a city once eclipsing in itself the splendour of every monument of human power and greatness ; and in point of natural situation possessing every advantage. It was renowned for commerce, and was a formidable naval power. “ It was open to the Persian  
“ gulf by the Euphrates, which was navigable  
“ by large vessels ; and which, being joined by  
“ the Tigris above Babylon, by the canal called  
“ Naharmalca, or the Royal River, supplied the  
“ city with the produce of the whole country to  
“ the north of it, as far as the Euxine and Cas-  
“ pian seas.” Accordingly she is described as dwelling upon many waters, trusting in ships, and abundant in treasures.

I trust it has been made sufficiently evident, that the destruction of Babylon in all its leading features was the subject of prophecy, and that those prophecies were amply accomplished, to permit us to pass on to the predictions respecting,

## II. TYRE.

Before we examine these, it will be necessary to speak of the situation and the antiquity of this city.



Tyre, like all other cities, laid claim to an antiquity more remote than the fact would justify. It was, however, a very ancient city; and of considerable strength in the days of Joshua\*. This was more than fourteen hundred years before Christ. But Josephus speaks of the building of Tyre as taking place but two hundred and forty years before the building of Solomon's temple†. Solomon's temple was begun one thousand and twelve years before our Lord's appearance, and completed in seven years. Two hundred and forty years added to one thousand and twelve, will fix the building of Tyre at twelve hundred and fifty-two years before Christ: about two centuries later than the days of Joshua. But as Tyre was not only then in being, but denominated "a strong city," it is evident that the historian refers to insular Tyre, and Joshua to continental Tyre, the last of which was older than the first. Indeed the founding of Tyre is involved in the obscurity of antiquity, and cannot with any certainty be determined. It is denominated "the daughter of Sidon"—and Sidon was a city as far back as the days of Jacob‡: and was probably built and named after the eldest son of Canaan, Noah's grandson.

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\* Josh. xix. 29.

† Joseph. Antiq. Jud. lib. viii. cap. 3. sect. 1. p. 341. tom. 1. Hudson's edit.

‡ Gen. xlix. 13.



I have already had occasion to speak of Tyre insular, and continental: to explain this circumstance, as also to elucidate certain expressions to be met with in the prophecies respecting the siege of Tyre; some of which speak of it as approached by land, and others as situated in the heart of the sea; it will be necessary to give a more particular description of this renowned city, and to observe that the predictions relate as well to Old as to New Tyre, so distinguished because the one was founded before the other; or perhaps, more properly speaking, I may say, one *part* of the city was built before the other: for they had the closest communication with each other, and Pliny in describing the compass of the city, blends in his calculation the old and the new together. He describes it as nineteen thousand paces, or nineteen Roman miles; about sixteen English\*. Whereas New Tyre, or the Island, contained scarcely forty acres†. Tyre consisted of three different cities in order of time, as they were built at different periods—different also in situation, as they stood partly on the land, and partly on the sea: but one in fact, as they had the closest connection:

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\* The Roman mile was 1000 paces; the English mile is 1200 paces.

† Anc. Univ. Hist. vol. 2. b. i. c. vi. p. 333. Note N.



Tyre on the Continent, called also Palæ-Tyrus, or Old Tyre : Tyre on the Island, which according to Strabo was about three miles from the Continent, and according to Pliny, little more than half a mile ; and Tyre on the Peninsula : for the old and new cities, were joined, it is said, by an artificial isthmus. It would not have been worthy the time which it has occupied, to state here minutely these particulars, except for the purpose of reconciling the prophecies respecting it with each other ; to account for their seeming inconsistency ; as well as to render intelligible some operations of that last siege by which it was utterly ruined. You will observe, that the prophecy of Ezekiel bears a direct reference to the situation of Tyre ; and borrows an image from it, to express the multiplication of the calamities hastening to overtake it's inhabitants, which they would perfectly well understand. “ Thus  
“ saith the Lord God, Behold, I am against thee,  
“ O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come  
“ up against thee, *as the sea causeth his waves*  
“ *to come up.*”—This is a singular beauty in the sacred writings, that they use imagery exactly suited to the event, to the occasion, and to the circumstances of the place, or the persons, whom the message concerns.

It may be easily conjectured, even from the slight description which has now been given of



Tyre, that it's situation was favourable to commerce; accordingly, it was always celebrated for it's merchandise. The three quarters of the world wafted wealth to it's ports; and people of all languages thronged it's street. It became the seat of liberal arts, and the market of the whole earth. Thence Solomon fetched workmen for the most delicate and finished parts of his temple. Riches and magnificence flowed in upon it on every side; and they brought with them their usual concomitants—pride and luxury. Their presumption was founded upon their insular situation, and upon the sovereignty of the seas. It was confirmed by a long course of prosperity. Tyre claimed the ocean as her peculiar dominion. She had first taught the art of braving it's tempests, and navigating it's surface. Her merchants were princes; and her inhabitants were guarded by nature and by art. In fact, the title which she assumed, “Queen of the Seas,” seemed justly due to her; and nothing appeared against her, but that, which was stronger than all her defences—the hand of God—and which was foretold, two hundred years before Alexander, (by whom the Divine purpose was most completely carried into effect,) in the passage read at the commencement of this Lecture. We are now to examine the amount of those circumstances which



were predicted in relation to this city; and to determine how far they are justified by facts.

The predictions relate to two different sieges; the last, as we have already said, by Alexander—the first; by a conqueror of earlier date, is now to be considered; and the events of this siege were circumstantially related, at least, a century before they took place. This is an indisputable point, easily determined by the distance of time between Isaiah, Ezekiel, and those other prophets, who thundered the judgments of God against this proud city, and the periods in which those monarchs flourished, who became the instruments of punishing it. As was Babylon, so also was Tyre, in the most prosperous condition, when the prophecies were delivered; so that there was no natural principle then existing from which a disastrous conclusion could be deduced. Permit me now to fix your attention upon the particulars foretold.

1. It was clearly predicted *by whom* this displeasure of God against Tyre should be executed. As in the former instance, so also in this, the conqueror is named. “For thus saith the Lord God, Behold, *I will bring upon Tyrus, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon;*” it is impossible to utter words more distinct—“*a king of kings*”—a title expressive of his greatness, and fitly



applied to a man, who was justly described by one who lived under his government; “whom he  
“would he slew, and whom he would he kept  
“alive, and whom he would he set up, and  
“whom he would he pulled down”—“*from the*  
“*north, with horses, and with chariots, and with*  
“*horsemen, and companies, and much people.*”  
You will observe that this is intended of the first siege, which was directed against the old city; and that this city was founded upon the Continent, on the brink of the sea, of course assailable by land as well as by sea: otherwise, the chariots, and the horses, and the horsemen, of the invader, had been in vain.

2. The *manner* of the siege was described; and described with that force peculiar to the prophetic writings—for it is related not as an event to come, but as one which had already taken place, although so long before-hand: because what God purposes, he regards as accomplished. “Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, caused his army to serve a great service  
“against Tyrus, every head was made bald,  
“and every shoulder was peeled.” And this was said before a blow had been struck—before this army had been collected. You will judge of the correctness of the prophecy, and of the accuracy of the description, by the hardships which



the soldiers must have undergone in a siege which lasted no less than thirteen years.

3. It's *effects* upon the inhabitants were predicted. The colonies of Tyre were scattered far and wide. — Carthage was the daughter of Tyre, as Tyre is called the daughter of Sidon; and they had countrymen diffused over Africa, the borders of the Mediterranean, and almost over the whole face of the known world. As the Tyrians had a superiority over Nebuchadnezzar by sea, it was natural that they should avail themselves of it, when they found resistance useless; and that, when the city was on the point of surrendering by land, they should make their escape by sea. Thus had Isaiah admonished—“*Pass ye over to Tarshish*”—which is understood by Bishop Newton, and by the most learned and able writers on this point, to intend Tartessus in Spain. “*Arise, pass over to Chittim;*” which is a term already explained to refer to countries bordering upon the Mediterranean. Accordingly, the Tyrians did escape to Carthage—and transported whatever was valuable thither, and to other places most conveniently situated to receive them. Nebuchadnezzar, after his long efforts were crowned with success—found only a city nearly deserted, stripped altogether of it's wealth, and received no



recompense for his toils. So had it been foretold by Ezekiel; in the prophecy that exhibited their labours, it was added—“*Yet had he no wages, nor his army for Tyrus, for the service that he had served against it*”<sup>\*</sup>.

4. A *partial revival* of the Tyrians was predicted. Exasperated to the last degree, Nebuchadnezzar, in the fury of his disappointment, shewed no pity to the few that remained; and left not the city till he had demolished it. Solitude and desertion were to brood among these ruins for a given space of time. “*And it shall come to pass in that day, that Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years, according to the days of one king*”—by which we are to understand the duration of Babylon’s power and influence among the nations. At the close of that period, by destroying this mighty empire, Cyrus broke the yoke from the necks of subjugated people. It was during this period, according to some historians, that insular Tyre, commonly called New Tyre, was built: but the best authorities, to which I have been able to gain access, affirm that it was founded long before that event, and at the time mentioned by Josephus. It also does appear to me, that Old Tyre, or Tyre on the Continent, never recovered the desolation effected by

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<sup>\*</sup> Ezek. xxix. 18.



Nebuchadnezzar; and that the revival predicted relates rather to the interests of the Tyrians, than to the spot which he immediately chastised. This revival is presented under the strong image of an harlot recovering her attractions, and courting distinction afresh. “Take an harp, “go about the city, thou harlot that hast been “forgotten, make sweet melody, sing many “songs, that thou mayest be remembered. And “it shall come to pass, *after the end of seventy “years, that the Lord shall visit Tyre*, and she “shall turn to her hire, and shall commit for- “nication with all the kingdoms of the world “upon the face of the earth\*.” Thus as the old city was destroyed, the new one rose into distinction, and again became a mart of universal merchandise. The prophet Zechariah, who lived after the events which have occupied your attention, describes the state in which he knew this city. “Tyrus did build herself a strong “hold, and heaped up silver as the dust, and “fine gold as the mire of the streets.”—But the sure word of prophecy had determined,

5. *It's total ruin.* The prophet added—“Be- “hold the Lord will cast her out, and he will “smite her power in the sea, and she shall be “devoured with fire.” Every sentence of this

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\* Is. xxiii. 16, 17.



short verse is important, and received a literal fulfilment in the conquest of Alexander over it. This second siege lasted only seven months; but it was one of the most sanguinary conflicts, on both sides, that the collision of human passions, and of human interests, ever produced. It was directed against New Tyre; for the old city was still in ruins; and if the isthmus, said to have united the continent with the island, ever was in existence, and was ever covered with houses, it had been destroyed before this period: for one of Alexander's chief difficulties, in this attack, was to form such a link between the city and the main land opposite to it. Accordingly, when he had, by prodigious exertion and perseverance, framed such a work, a storm arose, just as it was finished, and buried it in the abyss—neither could it have been at last effected, but for the facilities furnished his soldiers and workmen by the ruins of Old Tyre, which were scattered on the shore, and by the timber of Mount Lebanon, whose cedars shadowed its neighbourhood. Yet such a solid communication with the land was necessary, upon which the engines of war might be fixed; because Tyre was surrounded by a wall an hundred and fifty feet high, of correspondent strength, built upon the very extremity of the island, and washed on every side by the waves of the sea. After the



Tyrians had exhausted every means of defence and annoyance to the invaders; after having exasperated the impetuous monarch by killing his ambassadors, contrary to the laws of nations, and the dictates of humanity; “their power on the sea was smitten”—and after repeated repulses, when even Alexander hesitated whether he should not relinquish the conflict, and abandon the enterprise, the city was taken, and Tyre was “devoured with fire.” Then the fury of the conqueror was insatiable: the carnage was dreadful beyond description—beyond conception; and when the soldiers were weary of destroying, when his ferocious army was glutted with slaughter, two thousand men were left; and in violation of every human feeling, Alexander fastened them upon crosses along the seashore.

Tyre never more raised her head from the dust, as a nation. The mortal blow was then struck, and time has effected the rest. The aspect of prophecy intimated that the remnant should at a future day hear and embrace the gospel\*. And in the time of Diocletian they shed their blood in honour of a crucified Saviour†. But,

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\* Isaiah xxiii. 18. Zech. ix. 1—7.

† Consult Newton on the Proph. vol. i. sect. xi. p. 186—188.



as a people, their political existence was extinguished. It had been said, "*They shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers, I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God, and it shall become a spoil to the nations.*" It is now called Sûr. The appearance which it presents is that of a few fragments of scattered ruins, without so much as an intire house. "It's present inhabitants are only a few poor wretches, who harbour themselves in vaults, and subsist chiefly by fishing \*." Such names as Shaw, and Maundrell, as men of integrity and veracity, carry with them considerable weight; and their testimony is ample and explicit in confirmation of this prophecy, in their descriptions of the present state of Tyre. The eye of the traveller wanders in vain over the whole coast in search of something which may indicate the ancient magnificence of this city: he finds only bare rocks washed by the sea, bleached by the winds and the waves, and overspread with fishermen's nets, stretched out to dry; and a few stones scattered around, as sad but perpetual monuments, that on the spot now resigned to

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\* Anc. Univ. Hist. vol. ii. chap. 6. p. 333. Note O.



utter desolation, human industry was once impressed. From a consideration of the fidelity of prophecy in respect to Tyre, allow me to direct your attention to,

### III. EGYPT.

In reading again the verses which I have selected, as a prediction directly leading to a definite and particular point respecting this people, we shall have to do not merely with their former, but also with their present situation; and this is therefore one of those prophecies which have the advantage of existing evidences.

*“ I will bring again the captivity of Egypt, and  
“ will cause them to return into the land of Pa-  
“ thros, into the land of their habitation, and  
“ they shall be there a base kingdom. It shall be  
“ the basest of the kingdoms, neither shall it exalt  
“ itself any more among the nations: for I will  
“ diminish them, that they shall no more rule  
“ over the nations.”*

1. Review the different parts of the predictions contained in these verses, and in the connection in which they are found. The passage is short; but it very distinctly enumerates several interesting particulars, relative to Egypt. It is evident that her inhabitants were to be vanquished and dispersed; because the Lord de-



clares, “ I will *bring again* the *captivity* of  
“ Egypt, and will cause them to *return* into the  
“ land of Pathros, into the land of their habita-  
“ tion.” Egypt was to be subdued by Nebuchadnezzar, and her riches were to be his recompense, for his hard service against Tyre, which passed, as we have already seen, unrewarded.  
“ Therefore thus saith the Lord God, behold I  
“ *will give the land of Egypt unto Nebuchadnezzar*, king of Babylon, and he shall take her  
“ multitude, and take her spoil, and take her  
“ prey, and it shall be the wages for his army.  
“ I have given him the land of Egypt for his  
“ labour wherewith he served against it, (i. e.  
“ Tyre) because they wrought for me, saith  
“ the Lord \*.” Accordingly, the victorious arms of Nebuchadnezzar, passed through this country; and he transported many of it’s inhabitants, as he did those of other nations, whom he subdued, to Babylon: others, he settled in Pontus. A specific date was fixed for this dispersion; it was to last forty years. “ And I  
“ will make the land of Egypt desolate in the  
“ midst of the countries that are desolate, and  
“ her cities among the cities that are laid waste,  
“ shall be desolate *forty* years; and I will scatter  
“ the Egyptians among the nations, and will dis-

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\* Ezek xxix. 19, 20.



“perse them through the countries. Yet thus  
“saith the Lord God, at the *end of forty years*  
“will I *gather* the Egyptians from the people  
“whither they were scattered\*.” I frankly confess, that I know of no history which establishes this fact: of none that determines exactly the period of this dispersion; or that can prove whether the date assumed in the prophecy was the precise time. In the absence of direct evidence, we commonly accept that which is presumptive; and when we cannot obtain proof, in the most important cases, it is usual to admit probability. Presumptive evidence is at hand; and probability is directly in favour of the prediction. For it was about forty years from this conquest by Nebuchadnezzar, that Cyrus subdued Babylon; in consequence of which event, not only the Jews, but other nations, recovered their liberties; and it is reasonable to conclude that Egypt shook the yoke from her shoulder at the same time, and that her dispersed sons then returned “into the land of their habitation.”

But although they were at that time to recover their liberty, they were never to reach their former greatness. “*They shall be there a base*  
“*people*”—a phrase implying an alteration in their national character, as well as in their ex-

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\* Ezek. xxix. 12, 13.



ternal circumstances :—a *diminished* people, and inconsiderable in the eyes of the nations—the very *refuse* of all people, monuments of degraded humanity—“ It shall be the *basest* of “ the kingdoms, neither shall it *exalt* itself any “ more above the nations; for I will diminish “ them, that they shall no more rule over the “ nations.” Such is the testimony of the prophet: now observe,

2. It was very improbable, at the time when these prophecies were delivered, that Egypt should be reduced to the condition predicted. It was not unlikely that she might sometimes be compelled to submit to the fate of empires, and bow in her turn occasionally to the sceptre of a conqueror: it was not altogether improbable, that Babylon, which was in the days of Ezekiel in it's glory, and especially that Nebuchadnezzar, who was his contemporary, should render them for a season tributary. But the probability was, that they should rise again in their strength; and that, after the example of other nations, they would recover their former distinction. This conclusion would be justified by the whole of their preceding history, by their national character, by their warlike qualities. A throne which had been once filled by a Sesostris, was not likely to sink under one stroke, never to be reared again. A nation to whom neighbouring



nations applied for help: and upon whom the eyes of Israel and of Judah, in every extremity, were turned for assistance; might be disgraced by temporary defeat: but, one should have imagined, that, with the elasticity of vigour, it would spring again into it's former attitude, after a season, especially when the depressing power was removed. Neither was it at all probable that Egypt should wear the appearance of desolation. Egypt, that was well watered as the garden of God. Egypt, that boasted herself independent of the clouds and the showers which supplied other nations; and that looked with pride and confidence to her river; whose resources seemed to be within herself. To Egypt, other nations resorted in the day of calamity; when the harvests of Canaan failed, this was their store-house; and the patriarchs were frequently driven thither for succours. It was improbable that this cultivated land, should ever carry traces of desolation. Still less was it probable, that it's inhabitants should ever so degenerate as to be justly denominated a *base kingdom*—nay more, “*the basest of the kingdoms.*” She had always been celebrated for wisdom, distinguished by science, renowned for literature. So early as the days of Moses, higher praise could not be pronounced upon that eminent man, than that he was “learned in all the learning of the



“ Egyptians.” The same superiority was held by the same nation in the days of Solomon, of whose wisdom alone it is said, that it “ excelled “ the wisdom of the Egyptians.” Greece, of whom so many nations have borrowed intelligence; from whose stores of erudition Rome derived her knowledge; Greece herself was content to sit down at the feet of Egypt in the character of a disciple. No man would have adventured to predict the extinction of the wisdom and of the glory of such an empire, on any principles of human foresight, on any calculation of probability, on any thing less certain than divine inspiration. So far from probability, there did not appear a *possibility* of such a total change of national character, as that supposed in the prophecy, and which that degraded people *now* actually exhibit. But we remark,

3. It really became as abased as was foretold. Like all other similar events, this humiliation took place gradually—but it was not less therefore under divine superintendence. The means were natural: but the end was predetermined; the steady establishment of it argued superior agency; and the developement of it must have been a revelation from God. Egypt submitted to three powerful conquerors, and underwent as many total revolutions. First, Nebuchadnezzar drew his sword upon it, and



subjugated the empire. Then, Cambyzes stretched over it the iron rod of a tyrant, as well as imposed on it the heavy yoke of a master. After the Persian empire sunk under the oppression of Macedonian power, Alexander subdued it; from whom it passed into the hand of the most respectable of his successors. In process of time, it became tributary to Rome. Afterwards, it was subdued by the Saracens. And now, it is annexed to the Turkish empire. These changes, and the principal circumstances of them, were foretold by Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and others of the prophets: but without entering further into a discussion of their predictions, we seize one leading point, that it was to become, and for ever to continue, a *base* kingdom, of no account among the nations, but degraded in the eyes of them all. This fact we wish to establish, by observing,

4. Such it continues to the present day. It is affecting to read the accounts, which modern travellers give, of it's present prostration. The ignorance, the sloth, the cowardice, the treachery, the wickedness of the inhabitants, fill us at once with astonishment, with disgust, and with horror. The learned and accurate Pococke says, "The natives of Egypt are now a slothful people, and delight in sitting still, hearing tales, and indeed always seem to have been more fit



“ for the quiet life than for any active scenes.  
“ They are also malicious and envious to a great  
“ degree, which keeps them from uniting and  
“ setting up for themselves; and though they  
“ are very ignorant, yet they have a natural  
“ cunning and artifice as well as falsehood, and  
“ this makes them always suspicious of tra-  
“ vellers. The love of money is so rooted in  
“ them, that nothing is to be done without  
“ bribery. They think the greatest villanies are  
“ expiated, when once they wash their hands  
“ and their feet. Their words pass for nothing”  
—but why should I pursue the features of this  
frightful portrait?—Another celebrated writer\*,  
in fewer words has given them a character still  
more severe. “ The people of Egypt are all,  
“ generally speaking, swarthy—exceedingly  
“ wicked, great rogues, cowardly, lazy, hypo-  
“ crites, robbers, treacherous, and so very greedy  
“ of gain that they will kill a man, for a coin  
“ of no higher value than three halfpence.” A  
more recent and renowned traveller, Mr. Bruce,  
bears a correspondent testimony. Crimes are  
common among them, which in this assembly,  
I dare not so much as to name: nor ought they  
ever to be named among Christians. Surely, if

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\* Thavenot.



modern history be true, they are become—"a  
"base kingdom"—"the *basest* of the king-  
"doms."—

Yet Egypt seems to have had opportunity to have recovered something of her former position among the nations: at least to have risen from her abject humiliation, and to have acquired some advances towards a more dignified state of civilization. In a variety of respects it appears a desirable acquisition to polished and enlightened nations: yet it is permitted to rest in its degraded connection with a barbarous and pusillanimous empire. The footsteps of science and of refinement have recently and repeatedly passed over it; yet they have left no impressions behind them. It is a remarkable fact, and worthy your attentive consideration, that the two greatest empires in the world have lately visited Egypt, without effecting a single change in the natural character of its inhabitants. They do not seem to have inspired the people, during their respective residence there, with a single thought above their present condition; and if they did, of which there was not the least appearance while they were with them, the sand did not more easily resign the impress of their feet to the wind that sweeps over it, than their visits were forgotten. France had twenty-five thousand men there, for, I think, eighteen



months: not merely soldiers, but men of science. They effected nothing among the Egyptians. The power of France melted before the forces of our country; and Great Britain held possession of Egypt for about the same space of time. At the close of the campaign, our troops also left Egypt as they found it. It does not appear possible for them to recover even an attitude of decent cultivation; and the characters of prophecy are indelibly inscribed upon it—"It shall be a base kingdom; it shall be the basest of kingdoms."

I have nothing to add to these considerations; nor will I further intrude upon you to make a variety of remarks which might be elicited from the subject. I will only observe, that scepticism brings one general objection against these representations: it is, that they confine the attention of the Deity too much to one world, when he is surrounded by an infinity which demand his paternal regard. With other worlds the Bible has nothing to do, because it is a revelation which was designed for us alone. We acknowledge that prophecy not only supposes, but proves a minute attention to the affairs of men, and a constant controul over them. But it does not follow that God is less careful of every other branch of his works, or that his attention to them is less minute. God must be capable



of extending his superintendance not merely to every world that he has formed; but, as it may be necessary, to every particle which is employed in it's formation; and to every vapour that rises upon it's atmosphere. Whoever admits the being of a God, must connect with it (however imperfectly he may comprehend it) the conception of infinity. Any limit supposed, however removed, if it even extend to the utmost stretch of imagination, is still destructive of infinity. A grain of sand removed from the solid globe, leaves it a grain of sand diminished: but the widest range of our powers subtracted from infinity—leaves it infinity still. Upon these principles, we consider the representations of the sacred Scriptures, respecting the minute attention of God to our affairs, not only rational, and correctly true, but also altogether honourable to the divine character: and while we rejoice in his superintendance, Revelation assures us, that “his tender mercies are” equally “over *all* his works.”



## NOTES.

## NOTES TO THE EIGHTH LECTURE.

NOTE 1.—Xenophon in enumerating the nations subdued by Cyrus, and from the conquest of which he came up against Babylon, says—  
 Κῦρος δὲ παραλαβὼν ὡσαύτως καὶ τὰ ἐν τῇ Ἀσίᾳ ἔθνη αὐτόνομα ὄντα, ὁρμηθεὶς σὺν ὀλίγῃ Περσῶν στρατιᾷ, ἐκόντων μὲν ἡγήσατο Μήδων, ἐκόντων δὲ Ὑρκανίων· καί τις ἄλλος δὲ Σύρας, Ἀσσυρίους, Ἀραβίας, Καππαδόκας, Φρύγας ἀμφοτέρους, Λυδίας, Κᾶρας, Φοίνικας, Βαβυλωνίους· ἤρξε δὲ καὶ Βακτριῶν, καὶ Ἰνδῶν, καὶ Κιλικίων· ὡσαύτως δὲ Σακῶν, καὶ Παφλαγόνων, καὶ Μαριανδυνῶν, καὶ ἄλλων δὲ παμπολλῶν ἐθνῶν, ὧν ἔδ' ἂν τὰ ὀνόματα ἔχοι τις εἰπεῖν. Here he names the Syrians, Assyrians, Arabians, Cappadocians, both the Phrygians, Lydians, Carians, Phenicians, and lastly the Babylonians as subdued by him. “Moreover,” he adds, “he reigned over the Bactrians, Indians, Cilicians, the Sacæ, Paphlagones, and Mariandyni.” No less than sixteen nations are represented in this passage as subjected to him; and this is not the whole; for the historian says “There were many other nations,” too tedious to be recited, who acknowledged his controul. It might well be said, by the prophet, that he should “ungird the loins of kings.”

*Xen. Cyrop. vol. i. lib. i. p. 9. Hutchinson's edit. Glasg. 1767. 12mo.*

NOTE 2.—In his notes upon the prophecies of Isaiah, affixed to his translation, the learned and excellent Bishop Lowth, has given some most interesting information respecting Babylon, in his criticisms upon those chapters which relate to her glory and to her fall. On Chapter XLV. v. 1. he says—“That I may open before him the valves; and the gates shall not be shut. The gates of Babylon within the City, leading from the streets to the river, were providentially left open, when Cyrus' forces entered the city in the



“ night through the channel of the river, in the general disorder  
 “ occasioned by the great feast which was then celebrated : other-  
 “ wise, says Herodotus I. 191. the Persians would have been shut  
 “ up in the bed of the river, and taken as in a net, and all destroy-  
 “ ed. And the gates of the palace, were opened imprudently by  
 “ the king’s orders to inquire what was the cause of the tumult  
 “ without; when the two parties under Gobrias and Gadatas rushed  
 “ in, got possession of the palace, and slew the king. Xenoph.  
 “ Cyrop. vii. p. 528. Edit. Hutch. 4to.”

*Lowth’s Isaiah, p. 208. 4to.*

The same judicious critic explains the methods by which Cyrus drained the river, and points out the effects produced by it.—“ By  
 “ the great quantity of water let into the lake, the sluices and dams  
 “ were destroyed; and being never repaired afterward, the waters  
 “ spread over the whole country below, and reduced it to a morass,  
 “ in which the river is lost.”

*Lowth’s Isaiah, p. 207, 208. 4to.*

He accounts further for the absense of all fragments of these once renowned cities, from the nature of those bricks which were made by the ancients, and cemented with bitumen: although the cement hardened by time, the bricks being made of earth or clay, mixed, or beat up with straw to make the parts cohere, and dried only in the sun—“ when a wall of this sort comes to be out of repair, and  
 “ is neglected, it is easy to conceive the necessary consequences;  
 “ namely, that in no long course of ages it must be totally destroyed  
 “ by the heavy rains, and at length washed away, and reduced to  
 “ it’s original earth.”

*Lowth’s Isaiah, p. 95. 4to.*

A description of the city in it’s original splendour, and of the various changes which it underwent from it’s subjugation by Cyrus, to it’s utter annihilation, is given by the same Writer in his notes on Chapter the thirteenth.

*Lowth’s Isaiah, p. 93 & 94. 4to.*

To this excellent work, I beg leave to refer the Reader; as to extract his sentiments more at large would occupy too much space in the present note. The seventh book of Xenophon’s Cyropædia contains also very important information on this subject, as well as the history which Herodotus gives of this singular and successful expedition.



## LECTURE IX.

## PROPHECIES RESPECTING THE MESSIAH.

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 JOHN i. 45.

*We have found him of whom Moses in the Law, and the Prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.*

WE have now arrived at a point, whence we can obtain a prospect of him, connected with whom, more or less, is every prophecy standing upon record; every transaction in the dispensations of religion, and in the dispensations of providence, that preceded him; and no less every succeeding event to the consummation of all things. The history of empires gathers a new character of importance, in the estimation of the Christian, from the circumstance, that it stands related, more nearly or remotely, with the history of human redemption. The predictions respecting the desolations of some coun-



tries, and the triumph of certain selected heroes, appearing on the pages of inspiration, bear an inseparable relation to the interests of the Jewish nation; and thus their link of union with the Messiah is rendered manifest. If we could collect the various records which time has destroyed; and if to these we could add all the transactions which either perished with the actors, or have had merely a transient existence beyond their immediate day in tradition; if we could unite all these, so as to form one perfect history of mankind, from the Fall of his First Parent to the appearance of his Redeemer; we should be able to take a more comprehensive view of the harmony of all the arrangements of Providence with this great Period; and at the same time to trace with more precision and minuteness the bearing of particular circumstances, which now appear fragments broken off from the vast whole, only because we lack the means to discover their union. Without the possession of these advantages, which it has pleased the wisdom of God to withhold, there remains to us sufficient of both history and prophecy to establish the harmony of Providence with Redemption; and to allow us to elucidate the subject of prophecy by the beams of the Sun of Righteousness. In availing ourselves of the means in our power we shall find much to excite



our admiration of those capacious schemes, which infinite goodness designed, infinite wisdom arranged, and infinite power executed. We shall often stand astonished at the lucid order of events with predictions; and no less at the clearness of prophecy itself, the accuracy with which the character, the person, and the offices of the Messiah are delineated, and the plenitude of evidence by which it is supported. We shall discover that every thing relating to the Mosaic economy, while it depended upon the Christian dispensation, was, from the beginning, designed to be absorbed in it. We shall sympathize with those prophets, and kings, and mighty men, who saw the day of Jesus Christ afar off, and desired in vain to approach it's meridian; who anticipated blessings reserved for posterity, which they were not allowed to participate; and who believed in Him, who had not as yet been manifested in the flesh. "These all died in  
"faith, not having received the promises, but  
"having seen them afar off, and were persuaded  
"of them, and embraced them, and confessed  
"that they were strangers and pilgrims on the  
"earth." We shall be convinced, on the contrary, that nothing but the most fatal blindness, the most inveterate prejudice, the most obstinate ignorance, the most determined enmity, on the part of those who refused to ac-



knowledge Christ, could resist testimonies so ample and so decisive. Gratitude, on our part, cannot fail to be excited for the superiority of our privileges over those of the most eminent and distinguished characters under the former Covenant; and for the spiritual direction under which we are enabled to say this night, “We have *found* him of whom Moses in the Law, and the Prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph.”

The testimony of the Law, and of the Prophets to the Messiah; and the accomplishment of that testimony in Jesus of Nazareth, are two positions to be found in the triumphant address of Philip to Nathanael. Our attention at present must be divided, between a general review of the testimony of the Law; and some preliminary remarks on the more extended evidence of the Prophets.

#### I. THE PREDICTIONS OF THE LAW RESPECTING THE MESSIAH.

In collecting these, we shall have opportunity to examine some detached prophecies to be found in the Mosaic writings, general indeed as to their nature, but sufficiently distinct to determine their aspect, and not less impressive for being less particular than some succeeding pre-



dictions. It will also be necessary to include in this investigation *that* evidence to the coming of the Messiah, which arose out of types, no less decisive and prophetic, than the predictions themselves in relation to this grand event. Let me entreat your consideration of

1. The explicit prophecies to be gathered from the Law concerning the Messiah.

That which has been usually denominated **THE FIRST PROMISE**, from the most serious and patient examination of the arguments used by different parties, as well as from the tenour of inspiration, I cannot but consider as a clear prediction on this subject. If I should not succeed in convincing you of the justice of the sentiment now advanced, I did not venture to produce it here, till it had been received into my own mind with intire conviction. I cannot, for a variety of reasons, (which in a course of Lectures professedly on prophecy, cannot be detailed at length,) regard the scripture narrative of the Fall of Man, as any thing more or less than a simple statement of Facts, from which indeed an important doctrine is deducible. Out of the representations of Moses arose the various systems of theology prevailing over the whole earth; and the testimony of antiquity in reference to this point, as a fact, is as large as it's confirmation of any Scripture fact whatever, and it's evi-



dence as luminous as the nature of the subject will allow. As a fact, it is perpetually exhibited in the Scriptures; their evidence respecting it, I apprehend, must be deemed decisive, because it is either true or false; if it be true it is in vain to appeal from it; if it be false in this instance, it's testimony is invalidated in every other; so far at least, as to leave us perpetually in doubt respecting it's veracity on every point that cannot be established on another basis than it's unsupported and single affirmation. A Revelation thus shaken and uncertain is in fact no revelation; it can never answer the purpose of a guide; it can never confirm us when we waver; it will serve only to increase our perplexity, when we doubt; it's doctrines and it's history must always be received with cautious hesitation; and after all we are left to determine every thing by the mere light of reason and of nature. There can be no medium: the truth of revelation must stand unimpeached in all points; or we shall be in continual and painful uncertainty as to what we are to receive as true, and what we must reject as false. I have asserted that the Scriptures maintain the fall of man as a fact. So the apostle says—"The serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty." So again, "Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." I appeal to you whether the



reference to the fall, in these passages, is made to it as an allegory, or as to a fact? So of the Mosaic history preceding this awful transaction, the apostle regards it as a narrative of facts; when he says, "For Adam was *first* formed, " then Eve;" and again, "The man is not of " the woman, but the woman of the man." I will only observe once again, that the parallels drawn by the Apostle Paul between the transgression of Adam and the Obedience of Christ, in the fifth Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans; and again, between the First and the Second Man, in the fifteenth Chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, forbid us to consider the Fall as an allegory—otherwise he is placing upon an equal footing, and comparing with each other, a Fact and a Fable; and on these principles of what weight or importance is his reasoning? It is an absurdity too great to be credible. You must therefore receive the account of the Fall as a Fact, or reject it; and in so doing destroy totally the authority of the Scriptures; since if it's testimony be untrue in one instance, it is doubtful in every other. But if the Fall of Man be admitted as a Fact, we must consider the declaration, "I will put enmity between " thee and the woman, and between thy seed " and her seed; he shall bruise thy head, and " thou shalt bruise his heel," as a prophecy re-



lating to the Messiah, and the design of his coming into the world. There is an affecting instance afforded of Divine tenderness in the timing of this promise: the remedy is introduced to heal the wound at the very moment when guilt had inflicted it. This is, in itself, a reason for so considering the passage in question. It seems impossible, to judge by the uniform benevolence of the Divine character, that God should exclude our first Parents from Paradise, having in the pity of his heart provided a Redeemer, without announcing his gracious designs, when he pronounced their sentence. If this be probable, then you must remark, that there is no *other* part of his language, recorded on this interesting occasion, that could be construed into any reference to the Messiah. Nor is it likely, supposing such a promise to be given, that it should be omitted on these pages, concise as the narrative is, when other circumstances of inferior importance (for such is the passage in question, if it do *not* relate to the Messiah) are recorded. But the question should seem to be laid at rest by subsequent events. We find Abel erecting an altar, and offering on it a propitiatory sacrifice; for which no reason can be assigned, except the expectation of a future atonement for sin, by “the seed of the “Woman;” who was offered in this early day in



a figure. In this point of view, every thing appears natural and luminous; man's wants are met as soon as they are felt; and although his punishment was heavy, in the prospect of that curse which he had entailed upon his posterity, his anguish was alleviated, in the expectation of One who should spring from his own loins, to restore the favour and the image of God. Under the form of a serpent had they been beguiled; under the name of a Serpent was their Tempter cursed; and in commemoration of this event, I presume, has he borne in the Scriptures the title of "THE OLD SERPENT." How joyfully would they hear of his defeat; and how patiently submit to the temporary ill, which their transgression immediately superinduced, in banishing them from Eden! As they quitted their blissful bowers, doubtless

Some natural tears they dropt, but wip'd them soon;

The world was all before them, where to choose

Their place of rest, and Providence their guide.

And how justly is this promise applicable to the Saviour: how completely is the prediction fulfilled! Satan bruised his heel, when permission was given him to afflict his body with torture; and still continues to bruise it, in the assaults suffered from the Prince of Darkness, by that Church, of which Jesus is, in every age, the Head.



Probably, it is in allusion to this very prophecy, that Isaiah said in reference to the Saviour himself, “he was *bruised* for our iniquities”—and that the war waged by the Powers of Evil upon the Church, is represented in the Revelation of John, as a conflict between the Woman and her seed, and the Dragon, who is also called the Serpent. Jesus bruised the head of the Serpent, when he crushed his power, destroyed his empire, and released his captives. He did it by miraculous agency on earth during his pilgrimage with man; he did it more effectually by his death; he continues to do it, through the efficacy of the same offering, and the agency of the same Spirit, by the preaching of his word still. Satan fell as lightning from heaven; he fell, but he did not, nor ever can, rise again in his strength, to accomplish the malignity of his designs. The victory, which is as yet partial, shall finally be complete, on the part of the redeemed, as it already is on the part of the Redeemer.

The next prediction which presents itself under the Law, relating to the Messiah, is, THE PROMISE TO ABRAHAM. Although no direct promise of the Messiah to Noah appears upon record; yet the renewal of God’s covenant with man, upon the renovation of the earth, expressed to the progenitor of the new world, doubtless included this interesting point, which was in-



deed the leading and principal object of every covenant; and accordingly a part of Noah's prophecies, relating to his sons, and to the different lot of their posterity, is universally considered to refer to their religious privileges, and to the immediate connection of Shem with Christ. As this may be considered matter of mere speculation by some, I have passed over it, to that, which is obvious, explicit, and indisputable. Here are the first footsteps of the selection of an Individual, and the separation of a direct line, as the line of the Messiah. Abraham is called from his idolatrous country, and divided from his family. He has two sons born to him. One is marked distinctly as the Child of promise, and the heir of a spiritual Covenant. It is foretold that he should exceedingly multiply in his posterity; but the grand prediction, and upon which your attention is to be fixed, is thus expressed; "In thy seed, shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." How is this accomplished? and in what sense could all the nations of the earth be blessed in his seed? except these words relate to Jesus of Nazareth, who according to the flesh descended from this illustrious patriarch? and to the gracious and benignant influences of his empire, when it shall have extended, as it will extend, over the face of the whole earth? In any other respect, how could the



Jews be considered as a blessing to all nations? They have always been a people apart from all other nations—as well by their singular rites, as by their national prejudices, by their religion, and by the express command of God. They lived in the days of their prosperity within themselves, shut up from all mankind at once by inclination and by necessity; and still, in their scattered state, they cannot blend with mankind, and are occupied in pursuing a separate interest. Yet if this promise be considered as a prediction of the rising glories of the Redeemer's kingdom, it is pre-eminently true; “for salvation is of the Jews:” it is already partially accomplished; and *we* are witnesses of it. It is evident, that this expectation will account for the desire of Children, universally felt, and expressed, by the daughters of Israel; every one hoped to be the mother of the Messiah; and for the circumstance, that barrenness was deemed the greatest reproach, disgrace, and curse, that could alight upon a family. If the shadow of a doubt can possibly remain upon the subject, I think even *that* must fade before the unequivocal declaration of Jesus himself, who asserted, in so many express terms, “Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad.” If any thing could be wanting to impress upon his mind the remembrance,



or the meaning of this promise, it was super-added in that singular demand which was made for the sacrifice of Isaac; and in the recompense at once of patriarchal faith, and of parental feeling, by the substitution of victim for victim when a ram was offered, and his son was spared. It should be recollected that it was upon this memorable occasion, and as a reward of his obedience, that this prophecy was delivered by the angel.

The two next prophecies upon which we alight in the law, are those celebrated predictions of JACOB and of BALAAM. The one—“The Sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a Lawgiver from between his feet, until SHILOH come, and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.” The other—“I shall see him, but not now, I shall behold him but not nigh: there shall come a STAR out of Jacob, and a SCEPTRE shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.” But as these have already been largely discussed, in their place, in the present course of Lectures, I shall not detain you to examine them, nor repeat the arguments by which I have endeavoured to justify an application of them to the Messiah.

There is a promise which has been considered by some Interpreters as relating to Christ. It



respects the Guide of the Israelites on their journey through the desert. “Behold, I send  
 “an Angel before thee to keep thee in the way,  
 “and to bring thee into the place which I have  
 “prepared: Beware of him, and obey his voice;  
 “provoke him not, for he will not pardon your  
 “transgression; for my name is in him.” The arguments by which this opinion is supported would be long to detail; and after all do not appear to me so conclusive as those which sanction the two preceding passages: I shall not therefore avail myself of it; although perhaps it would have been improper in enumerating the testimonies of the law, not to have named it. You will form your private opinions upon this passage, while we pass on to another more important, and at the same time more evident.

THE PREDICTION OF MOSES RESPECTING ANOTHER LEGISLATOR: for this, I apprehend, is the leading feature of the prediction, although he is designated by the title of “A PROPHET.” “The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a  
 “Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall  
 “hearken.” Neither to Joshua, nor to any succeeding prophet can this prediction apply; because no prophet ever did arise *like unto Moses*, as is expressly affirmed at the close of his Law. (Deut. xxxiv. 10—12.) Let us then see how



it will apply to Jesus Christ. He was a prophet: and by the confession of the people a great prophet. He was raised up from the midst of the Jews his brethren: he was “bone of their bone,” and “flesh of their flesh;” of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Judah, of the house of David. His miracles bore a strong resemblance to those of Moses; with this striking distinction; Moses acted as a Servant, upon commission; Jesus as a Son, by his own power and authority. They both fasted forty days: they both controuled the winds and the seas; the faces of both shone and were transfigured; they both refused a kingly crown; they both manifested in a supereminent degree the graces of meekness, patience, and long-suffering. The parallel has been run much further; and in my opinion has wandered far into the regions of fancy. But these are resemblances which are only subordinate; and the application of the prophecy to Christ is, in my mind, determined by other circumstances. They were both of them lawgivers. This is very material, as it forms an essential part of their character; as it constitutes the strongest parallel between them; and as it is true of no other prophet, succeeding Moses, Jesus excepted. Again, they both stood at the head of a new dispensation. “The Law came by Moses;” “but Grace and Truth by Jesus Christ.” Add



to this, they both, in effect, united the mediatorial, and royal dignity, with the prophetic. Moses often appeared as a mediator; and “he was king in Jeshurun.” It is surely unnecessary for me to run the parallel of Moses with Christ in this particular. On these three points they were alike; and when to these you add the threatening connected with this prediction—“it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words, which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him”—when you consider that the Jews did actually reject him, and that the curse lies heavily upon them to this hour in consequence of this rejection—the chain of evidence appears complete; and we are prepared, for the direct application of these words to Christ, by Peter and by Stephen\*.

Perhaps I ought to mention here, that it is generally agreed, that Moses is the Writer of the Book of Job; and if so, then the confession of faith by that great man, ought not to be omitted, among the testimonies of the Law, to Jesus of Nazareth. “Oh, that my words were now written! Oh, that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead, in the rock for ever! For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.

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\* Acts iii. 22, 23. vii. 37.



“ And though after my skin, worms destroy  
“ this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.  
“ Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes  
“ shall behold, and not another; though my  
“ reins be consumed within me.” The circum-  
stance that the author of the book is uncertain,  
renders it doubtful, whether this testimony  
should be arranged here; and precludes the ne-  
cessity of discussing the point, whether or not  
these words bear a direct reference to the Re-  
deemer. I do not, however, hesitate to say,  
that this is my opinion. Before I close the tes-  
timonies of the Law to Christ, it will be neces-  
sary to notice,

2. The Types. Here is a field opened of im-  
measurable extent; and we have leisure only just  
to cast our eyes over it. The second son of the  
first man is seen kneeling before an altar con-  
secrated to Christ; and presenting the “first-  
“ lings of his flock,” as a figure of that Saviour,  
who is called a Lamb without blemish and with-  
out spot. That the offering of Abel did really  
bear this aspect to the Messiah I cannot doubt;  
for independantly of the conviction which I feel,  
that the singular plan of shedding blood as an  
expiation of guilt, did not arise out of any natu-  
ral principle, but was an institution revealed,  
(and no question the direction of that institution  
to it's great object was not forgotten when it



was first enjoined,) the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews decides the point, when he says, that Abel offered his sacrifice “by faith,” and that, not in the difference of the gifts, but in this circumstance alone, consisted its superior excellence to the presentation of his malignant brother.

The translation of Enoch, which in that age of the world was a subject of universal notoriety, must, in proportion to the revelation made to them, have wafted the hopes of believing patriarchs forward to *his* day, who should “abolish death, and bring life and immortality to light by his gospel.” Such a signal instance of victory over this great adversary, when he had but just commenced his ravages, must have been particularly encouraging; and could not but have produced the effect which I have ventured to ascribe to it, supposing them to have had some explicit revelations respecting the Messiah. The sacred history preceding the flood is so very concise, that we cannot determine from it, with any degree of accuracy, the nature or extent of such revelations to the antediluvian patriarchs: but that they were more numerous and more luminous than is usually imagined, I think, may be collected from the testimony of Jude, that Enoch, the seventh from Adam prophesied both of the dereliction of professors in the last days,



and of the coming of Jesus to judgment. Now his translation would be a wonderful confirmation of his doctrine; and with revelations so clear as this last circumstance must lead us to imagine, would render Enoch, in this particular, in the estimation of his venerable contemporaries, a type of Christ.

Without any great exuberance of imagination, the ark which saved the family of Noah, might be considered as referring to a greater salvation.

The ladder, which Jacob saw in his vision, whose foot rested on the earth, and whose top reached to heaven, while angels ascended and descended upon it, appears not to have been without a mystical meaning: at least, so our Lord's own words appear to imply, when he promises Nathanael, and his fellow disciples—  
“ Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye  
“ shall see heaven open, and the angels of God  
“ ascending and descending upon the Son of  
“ Man.”

The very slavery and deliverance of Israel's descendants in Egypt—their journey—and their promised inheritance—have been considered, by the inspired Writers themselves, as bearing spiritual allusions.

But from the very commencement of the Mosaic dispensation, the testimony of the Types to their great Antitype becomes more lucid and



more diversified. On the eve of their departure from Egypt the passover was instituted; and every circumstance respecting it was so full of meaning as to render it worthy of perpetual commemoration, till it was absorbed in that original of which it was a striking copy, and “Christ our Passover was slain for us.” The choice of the victim, a lamb without blemish—it’s separation, in reference to him “who “verily was foreordained”—the way in which it was to be prepared—the forms with which it was to be eaten—the purpose which it was to answer—the sprinkling of it’s blood upon the houses of the Israelites—the effect which it produced, in the passing by of the destroying angel wherever the blood was seen—the institution of it as a lasting ordinance to the very end of that economy—all these things together, could not fail to make us acquainted with it’s design, even had it not been amply unfolded in the explanations of the New Testament Writers.

Among the types which shadowed forth the person and offices of the Messiah, and especially the design of his sufferings, we must not omit to mention the brazen serpent. Besides the impressive correspondence of circumstances, which might justify us in considering the one emblematical of the other, our Lord has himself placed the subject beyond controversy, by a direct selection and appropriation of this transaction,



from those which marked the journey of Israel through the wilderness. “As Moses lifted up  
“the serpent in the wilderness, even so must  
“the son of man be lifted up: that whosoever  
“believeth in him should not perish, but have  
“everlasting life.”

So of the long succession of Types instituted by Moses—and explained by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews: it would be an useless occupation of your time, to refer to the scape-goat, to the great day of atonement—to the priesthood—to the duties of the High Priest in the holiest place of the Sanctuary—to the various washings and feasts—all which are too obvious to require explanation, and too numerous to allow me to pass through them: besides which, were they otherwise in themselves, I could add nothing to the strength, to the fulness, to the perspicuity, of the reasoning employed in that Epistle to which I have referred you, and which is always in your hands.

Thus the Law testified of Christ by a variety of explicit prophecies, and no less by types, which predicted, with equal force and harmony, his coming and his great purpose. It is necessary to name, and I shall only name,

II. The more extended evidence of the prophets.

The discussion of this interesting subject must



stand over till the next Lecture. And I believe it will be necessary to trespass farther upon your patience than the printed list announces\*. I find it will be impossible to finish the subject in the next Lecture; especially as I consider this, merely preliminary to those greater and more decisive testimonies which are behind. We shall have occasion to speak of our Lord's names, his offices, and his herald; of his birth, his life, and his death; of his exaltation and his reign; all of which are the subjects distinctly of many and impressive prophecies. In filling up this outline I prefer even extending the course to occupying too much of your time, and exercising too far your patience in a single Lecture; especially as I cannot relieve the tedium necessarily excited by long discussion, by the vivacity of imagination, or by historical details, in justice to my subject—which is too solemn for speculation, while I am confident it is *in itself*, too interesting for indifference.

Already, on the mere surface of the subject, we may begin to trace the correspondence between Jesus of Nazareth and the predictions of the Law respecting the Messiah; a correspond-

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\* The printed list had proposed to comprehend the Course in twelve Lectures, of which only two were appropriated to the prophecies relating to the Messiah.



ence so complete, that the chief priests and the rulers of the Jews did not attempt to refute him, when publicly in their synagogues he taught the people out of it “the things concerning himself.” Upon this correspondence was founded the conviction of the disciples; when they said, “We have found him of whom Moses “in the law and the prophets did write.”—They express no doubt, no hesitation, no anxiety on the subject. Their language is the language of confidence, expressed with the simplicity of truth. And they were adequate to form an accurate as well as a decisive judgment upon this point. They had means of comparison which we cannot possess. Not only had they the prophecies which remain to us, but they saw the Redeemer’s face, they heard the grace and truth poured upon his lips, they knew his manner of life, they listened to his preaching, they beheld his miracles, they were companions of his tribulation, they were present at the closing scenes of his sufferings, they were not separated from him till he left the world. At an advanced period of his pilgrimage here, after his resurrection from the dead, and just before his ascension to glory, he appealed to them, and said, “Ye are witnesses of these things.”—Their conviction is also mingled with joy—the address of the text, is an exclamation of inexpressible de-



light. The very words of Philip were used by a great philosopher when he was conscious that he had immortalized his name by the discovery of a new law in hydrostatics. The occasion was more worthy the transport of the Disciple: for to find "Him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write," is to be in possession of every thing which we need in this world, and every thing which we can enjoy in another. While you participate the blessing revealed by the prophets and discovered by the apostles, it is but just, in sharing their triumph, that you should feel their gratitude.



## LECTURE X.

PROPHECIES RESPECTING THE MESSIAH  
CONTINUED.

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 LUKE XXIV. 44.

*And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.*

**I**T is manifest from a close investigation of the history and the predictions of the Old Testament, that the Saints under that dispensation enjoyed large and comprehensive views of the Messiah about to come. The circumstance that they had less of light than ourselves acted as a powerful stimulation upon these pious minds to enlarged exertion and to more accurate research. They did not sit down satisfied, as we but too frequently do, with sweeping over the surface



of a text: but in proportion as the parts of revelation were fewer, they studied them with greater diligence, with an interest more lively, and with an application more intense. An exuberance of privileges, an overflow of communication, a perfection of light and of knowledge, have, by the perversion of our nature, in too many fatal instances, rendered the world at large, and even professors, careless, lukewarm, indifferent towards Him who was the desire of all nations, and was long and anxiously expected as the glory of Israel. Human imperfection commonly diminishes the value of intercourse with any exalted personage, by the privilege of intimacy and frequency. This unfavourable operation affects some minds especially, while it is felt in a measure by all. Contempt is proverbially said to arise out of familiarity: if this is to be received with certain limitations, the foundation of the axiom is laid in truth; and it is a miserable and mortifying consideration that its bearings lie in every direction. It would hardly be conceived, if it were not established by matter of fact, that even the scriptures are become undervalued by the extent of their circulation, and by that freedom of access which it is the distinguished privilege of the age to have to this spiritual treasury. While our pious ancestors, from whom they were sealed, and to whom they were pro-



hibited, would have relinquished with delight a large part of their small property, for a book, and even for a leaf of this Sacred Record, the entire volume lies in every room of a professor's princely mansion, unread, unprized, and covered with dust and neglect. This universal diffusion of light, is still a blessing, although perverted, and abused; and the condemnation rests upon the head of those with whom the negligence originates and abides; who are insensible of the good which they despise; and who "love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil."

The method which we shall pursue, in endeavouring to strike out the characters of our divine Master from the testimony of prophecy, will be simply to follow the leadings of the Bible itself on this great subject. The manifestations of the Messiah were not sudden and overwhelming; but gradual and increasing. His rising upon the world, resembled the rising of the natural sun: preceded by the dawn, the twilight, and the preparatory glories of the East, at length he himself appeared, clothed in radiant and serene majesty. It is our wish with humility to follow that path which he himself has marked out; and to attempt the gradual developement of his character by unfolding the progressive features of prophetic revelation.



Our last effort was to collect from the writings of Moses, passages which related evidently to some distinguished and extraordinary personage; which upon an examination of their leading characters, presented a striking resemblance to Jesus of Nazareth; and which so considered, instructed us to regard him as the Messiah. The application of them to the Saviour, which we ventured to make, was corroborated by the practice and opinions of the writers of the New Testament; a confirmation, which in the estimation of those who admit their inspired authority, will be deemed decisive; while others will probably consider their testimony as ranking no higher than an evidence of the prevailing opinions of the day, respecting the exalted personage then universally expected, and the popular sense of the passages in question. Even in this last point of view, they are of importance; and so much of interest must of necessity be granted them by the party with whom they weigh least. After the same enumeration, for the same reasons, and on the same authority, we considered the ceremonies of the former dispensation, and its sacrifices, as so many types of the Messiah; and the whole Mosaic economy as a “shadow of good things then to come,” but which have been since possessed, and are now pressing on to perfection. So far as we have already advanced, I



consider myself as only having made statements preparatory to the immediate discussion of the prophecies respecting the Messiah. This evening also will be occupied in the consideration of those general predictions which are scattered over the prophets, and which relate to his general character. From this time, and after the present Lecture, it will be necessary to produce the evidence of the infallible truth of this “sure word of prophecy,” by attending to that particular delineation of the Messiah, in his person, his life, and his sufferings, with all their consequences, which were so minutely and exactly accomplished.

There is one particular position which I shall endeavour at this time to establish—That the prophets constantly instructed the respective generations of the Jewish nation in which they successively lived, to expect an extraordinary personage whom they denominated the Messiah, and whom they sometimes described in general terms, and sometimes exhibited with a minuteness of representation which has astonished succeeding ages, who have had the advantage of comparing the prophetic records with the history of that person to whom, from the very circumstance of the exact agreement between them, they unquestionably relate.

To examine some general prophecies, previous



to a future exhibition of more striking and particular predictions, and necessary as preparatory steps to more minute investigation, is my present object; and all that remains of your time will be occupied in considering a few of those passages which bear a reference generally to THE NAMES, AND THE OFFICES, OF THE MESSIAH.

The illustrious personage to whom these singular writings directed the attention of the world, is described,

I. BY CERTAIN NAMES AND TITLES.

These may be arranged under three distinct classes—Metaphorical names—titles of dignity—and names of humiliation.

1. Those which are METAPHORICAL. The language of prophecy abounds in images of the most impressive and sublime character. The style of the east is replete with expressions figurative even to exuberance; and is scarcely tolerated by the less elevated, but perhaps more correct, genius of Europe. The Scriptures have all those descriptive characters which so eminently distinguish the quarter whence they are derived to us, and where they were so long deposited. But contrary to the general style of eastern composition, there is nothing tumid in their descriptions, nothing cum-



brous in their ornaments, nothing forced and unnatural in their expressions. Their magnificence is equalled only by their chastity; and arises not out of that pomp of circumstance so laboriously wrought by other writers their neighbours, but from the unaffected grandeur of their thoughts, and the native sublimity of their subjects. The eloquence of the Bible is energetic, lively, and affecting: its style mingles simplicity with majesty; and its figures heighten the effect, without diminishing the force, of every subject on which they are employed. Poetry requires, and usually possesses, more of imagery and of embellishment than any other species of composition whatever. The poetry of the east, no less than that of other nations, distinguishes itself from the prose, by the strength and variety of its imagery. The prophecies are committed to the sacred pages in poetry; and this circumstance will account for the prevalence of figurative expressions in the books of the prophets over every other part of the inspired writings not poetical. If it entered into the business of this Lecture, many beautiful specimens might be produced, from an abundance that would require little selection. It might also be easily proved that the poetical parts of the Bible, as far excel eastern compositions, by the force and accuracy of their imagery, as it is superior to all other writings in the simplicity of its general style.



These comparisons and criticisms, however, belong to another department: and the remarks obtruded thus far upon your attention were designed merely to account for the circumstance that, on so interesting an occasion, so much should be conveyed to mankind by imagery, in a case where, perhaps, some might expect only plain and direct reference. Besides, this method aided that gradual developement of the divine plans which God had purposed from the first; and the reference which was in earlier ages remote and figurative, as the time of the advent of Christ approached, became more direct, and the language more simple. It was common to represent thrones and dominions by stars and celestial bodies; and it is a fact, that in foretelling the reign of the Messiah, no part of nature was left unsearched for imagery expressive of his characters; while all the figures employed were full of grandeur and meaning, and sufficiently striking and appropriate.

LIGHT, and especially the light of the SUN, naturally presented itself to the prophetic eye, when the Seer designed to express the Redeemer's glory; or to describe the beneficial effects produced by his knowledge among mankind. Darkness but too well symbolized the situation of man considered collectively or individually, and the state of the world. Sin had depraved



human nature, ignorance had obscured the human mind, and the curse outraged society. Its order was deranged, its harmony destroyed, its peace annihilated, its bonds dissolved, its beauty defaced. In the mean time the prophet saw an indistinct light resting upon the mountains of the east like the breaking of the morning, and conducted to their summit by the Spirit, at an height which no mortal foot could climb, anticipated the future day, and even saw the rising sun. To speak without a figure; wrapt in the visions of the Almighty in the midst of prevailing ignorance and depravity, he foresaw the coming of the Messiah, and foretold the gracious influence of his dominion. Light was the figure that conveyed his impressions to his countrymen. “The people that walked in darkness  
“ have seen a great *light*; they that dwell in  
“ the land of the shadow of death, upon them  
“ hath the *light* shined.” The connection of this passage marks its decided reference to the Messiah: and because the event was certain, he speaks of it as already having taken place: no uncommon practise with the prophets. Another says, “Unto you that fear my name shall  
“ the *Sun of Righteousness* arise, with healing  
“ in his wings.” In reference to these figurative predictions, Jesus calls himself “the bright  
“ and *morning star* ;” and the father of John



the Baptist, speaks of the Saviour as “the *day-spring* from on high, which, through the tender mercy of God hath visited us;” while Simeon pronounced him “a *light* to lighten the Gentiles, and the *glory* of his people Israel.”

Sometimes a tree planted by rivers of waters, flourishing in the pride of it's situation met the eye of the prophet, and reminded him of the flourishing estate of the house of David, during his personal reign, and that of Solomon immediately succeeding. It had been revealed that Jesus should descend from that House; and he seized the image to transmit to future ages, and to convey to that in which he lived, his views of the Messiah. He said, “Behold my servant who is called THE BRANCH.” You will recollect that under this figure Joseph was blessed by his fond and dying parent: it was therefore considered in that day as an image of fecundity and prosperity, and became an appropriate image of the success and universality of the future empire of the personage expected and represented under this metaphorical language.

Then vegetable life was exhausted of it's beauties to describe the object of their admiration. A plant was supposed, possessing medicinal qualities, and an healing virtue: this was considered an appropriate symbol of Him, who was to heal human calamities—and he was called “A



“PLANT OF RENOWN.” So he denominates himself a “VINE”—and John calls him “the TREE OF LIFE, whose leaves are for the *healing* of “the nations.” Proclaim it’s virtues, and pronounce it’s praise, ye who have tasted it’s fruit, and feel within yourselves the witness that ye shall never die!

In reference to the shelter which he was to afford the repenting sinner from the wrath of God, and the refreshment derived from him amid the trials of life by his people, he is called A COVERT, and “the SHADOW OF A GREAT “ROCK in a weary land”—“A Man shall be a “*hiding-place* from the wind, and a *covert* from “the tempest.”

When the standard of a Monarch is erected, his people flock to his banner, and thus give a public testimonial that they espouse his cause, and that they are willing to die in his service. In allusion to this circumstance, the Messiah is called “AN ENSIGN of the people.” Those who admit the claims of Deity flock to his standard. Or, the prophet perhaps designed to represent him as a Beacon standing a signal to those who wander, that they may find their way home to God.

Because there is not salvation in any other, he is called “a FOUNDATION.” “Behold I lay in “Zion for a *Foundation* a STONE, a tried stone,



“ a precious corner-stone, a sure Foundation.” Ah! had the Jews but believed their prophets! then the house of Israel had been builded up, and not, as at this time laid in ruins! But this is “ *the Stone*, that was set at nought of the “ Builders.”

A cluster of metaphors may be found in one passage by the prophet Hosea. “ I will be as “ the Dew unto Israel; he shall grow as the “ Lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. “ His branches shall spread, and his beauty “ shall be as the olive-tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow “ shall return, they shall revive as the corn and “ grow as the vine.” These images seem unquestionably to refer to the Messiah; or rather to the revival of Israel under his benign influence. Such are the metaphorical titles given to the Messiah in the prophecies—all of them unequal to the grandeur of the subject: but they are such as nature or art will furnish; and we must be satisfied, on such a theme, to advance as far as human language will allow, where imagination fails in conceiving it's magnitude, and faints in attempting to grasp it's infinity. There are many more which might be produced; but while these appear to be the leading ones, it would be injury to that which remains of the



subject to enlarge further here. We next produce,

2. His titles of DIGNITY. We select *four*, as a specimen of others.

Daniel speaks of him under the name of "THE ANCIENT OF DAYS"—and describes in the most forcible and impressive manner, the majesty of his appearance, his resistless authority, and his age commensurate with eternity. "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and *the Ancient of Days* did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him." It is only necessary to remark here, that had Jesus been a mere man or only a great prophet, this description of the Messiah could not have been applicable to him: moreover, if he had no existence prior to his coming into this world,—none previous to his appearance among men as the reputed son of Joseph—he could lay no claim to the title of "the Ancient of Days:" so that either the prophet mistook the nature of the Messiah, or Jesus assumed too much in claiming the Messiah-



ship, or he was more than some who call themselves Christians are willing to allow.

Isaiah denominates him "THE MIGHTY GOD." The simple name of God in the original is derived from a root implying power and strength; and the force of this title is doubled by the epithet *mighty* superadded. It appears to convey clearly the ideas of omnipotence and all-sufficiency. In the same connection, the same person is called "THE EVERLASTING FATHER," or the Father of eternity.

JEHOVAH is the appellation selected by Jeremiah: "this is the name by which he shall be called *Jehovah* our righteousness." The derivation of this word from a root which signifies independant, self-derived, inextinguishable existence, consecrates it to the immortal, unchangeable God.

EMANUEL, was the name which expressed the residence of this exalted Being with man; and shadowed forth with peculiarly felicity the future Messiah: "being interpreted" it is "God with us."

It is a most extraordinary circumstance, and on all natural principles unaccountable, that after these lofty titles, these men who lived so long before the event, should, in reference to the very same person, apply,



3. Names of HUMILIATION. Unless they had been divinely inspired to develope the plans of God this could never have taken place: because, had they been feigning a character, it would never have entered into their imaginations to have described him, at one and the same time, the most lofty and the most abject of all beings! Yet in the prophecies, among many titles of even ignominy, he is called a CHILD, and a SERVANT—the one an image of weakness, the other of degradation.

For one moment rest upon this part of the subject, and conceive Daniel's "Ancient of days"—called a servant. What fancy could bring together images so removed? or what impostor would ever think of blending such qualities as the most invincible power and the most helpless debility in one person! Yet "my SERVANT" resounds through the prophets in reference to him who is even called "Jehovah's Fellow"—and in the very same passage, Isaiah brings this power and this weakness together! "Unto us a CHILD is born, unto us a Son is given"—what follows? "and the government shall be upon *his* shoulder; and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, *The mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.*" What apparent incongruity! It is not, it could not be, the devise of man; for it



was beyond man's powers to reconcile contradiction so manifest! But God reconciled it, when "the word was made flesh"—when a child grew up to command the elements—to raise the dead—to restore decayed organs—to suspend, or surpass, or controul, or counteract the laws of nature. In short, it was the character of the Messiah, although it was such a character as human ingenuity could never have thought of framing!

The person that bears in the prophecies this variety of names is described,

## II. BY HIS OFFICES.

As the Messiah, Jesus was designated to sustain some most important offices: and the description of these constituted much of the character of the Saviour when he was the subject of prophecy. In the enumeration of his names, we carefully selected such only as bore no immediate reference to this branch of the subject; but most of those offices, to which he was appointed, may be ascertained from the very titles by which he is distinguished. He is called an ANGEL, and the MESSENGER OF THE COVENANT; clearly implying that he was to announce peace, reconciliation, and amity between God



and man ; and himself to submit to be the servant in fulfilling this office. “ The Lord whom  
“ ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple :  
“ even the Messenger of the Covenant whom  
“ ye delight in : behold he shall come, saith the  
“ Lord of Hosts.” He is called JESUS, a name which signifies *Saviour*, and sufficiently expresses the nature of his Mission. The titles MESSIAH and CHRIST, both mean *the Anointed One*, and clearly imply his appointment to certain offices, and his separation for illustrious purposes : in allusion to the most ancient method of setting apart individuals to any high or sacred employment, by pouring oil upon the head. This custom is not yet wholly laid aside. In the solemn and public recognition of a Monarch’s induction to his great and arduous duties, he is still anointed with oil. Under the Old Testament dispensation, it was common to anoint prophets as well as Kings, as a token of the divine choice. Thus Elijah was commanded, “ Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah, “ shalt thou *anoint* to be prophet in thy room.” In the same way the high priest, and the inferior priests were consecrated to the services of the Sanctuary. Moses received explicit directions on this subject respecting Aaron and his sons : “ thou shalt *anoint* them, and consecrate “ them, and sanctify them, that they may mi-



“ nister unto me in the priests’ office.” From these recollections it is apparent that when the person whose birth is foretold is called the Anointed one, two things may be inferred ; First, that it necessarily supposes he was set apart to fill certain high offices ; and Secondly, that the expression may include royal, prophetic, or priestly dignity—or, as is the fact in this instance, all of them unitedly. That the prophets considered the person whose coming they predicted thus consecrated, is evident from the tenour of their writings ; and one single passage, selected on account of it’s peculiar perspicuity, shall serve as an example of all. In the name of him who was to come, Isaiah says—“ The  
“ Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because  
“ the Lord hath *anointed* me to preach good  
“ tidings unto the meek, he hath sent me to  
“ bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liber-  
“ ty to the captives, and the opening of the  
“ prison to them that are bound ; to proclaim  
“ the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day  
“ of vengeance of our God, to comfort all that  
“ mourn : to appoint unto them that mourn in  
“ Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes,  
“ the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of  
“ praise for the spirit of heaviness.”—This comprehensive passage furnishes a full detail of those numerous and gracious offices which the Mes-



siah was to fill, although they are expressed in general terms.

Before this part of the Lecture is dismissed, it will be necessary to specify a few of those leading stations to which the Messiah was appointed, as distinguished from these general declarations. In a variety of instances prophecy was more explicit, and we cannot therefore be satisfied without a more distinct enumeration of his offices. Had all the predictions been expressed thus indefinitely, the knowledge which those who had only seen the promises afar off, would have been necessarily much more contracted than it really was, and the evidences of the Messiah less conclusive in favour of Jesus.

1. He was to be a King. “Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his *Anointed*, saying, Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my KING upon my holy hill of Zion.” The Hebrew word implies—“I have *anointed* my KING.” Again, “Thy THRONE, O God, is for ever and



“ ever; the SCEPTRE of thy KINGDOM, is a right  
“ sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness and hatest  
“ wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath  
“ anointed thee with the oil of gladness above  
“ thy fellows.” Again, “The Lord said unto  
“ my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I  
“ make thine enemies thy footstool.” The connection of these passages contains language which never could apply to David; and which furnish the outline of no less an empire than that which is ascribed to the Messiah, and which, as we shall hereafter see, was to be universal and eternal.

2. He was to be a priest. We have already looked over the Mosaic economy, not so much to gratify our curiosity in relation to the ceremonies and the institutions of antiquity, as to trace the resemblance which they bear to that illustrious person to whom they all looked forward. These add much to the elucidation of the Saviour's offices. The propriety both of the sacrifices commanded, and of the priesthood instituted, arises out of their determinate direction to a future and a superior object; and severed from this connection they have no apparent meaning, and no decided end.—But thus contemplated, they exhibit the Messiah, first as a Sacrifice, and afterwards as a Mediator. These were two things essential to the priest's office.



He was first to atone for sin, by shedding of blood, and then, thus having entered into the Sanctuary, to solicit pardon and a blessing on the people. While the types were thus figurative of the Messiah's offices, the language of prophecy, was still more explicit, and the terms employed the most express that could be selected. "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent: Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." Here is a striking peculiarity. Other priests could not continue by reason of death. Aaron had many successors, till that order of things ceased. Every one in his turn laid aside his robes, bowed his anointed head as low as the dust of death, and yielded his sacred office to another. But not merely the priesthood, in the hands of the Messiah, was to be eternal; he himself is described as having neither beginning of days nor end of life—"a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."—The reference to this singular character, and the ground on which he was a type of the Messiah's priesthood, appears to be twofold. First, he was priest not in the usual way of consecration and appointment, by derivation from others, but by immediate constitution of God. As it does not appear that he was a link in a chain of priesthood running through his family, but that



he stood singly in his office, by the institution of God himself: so we do not read that he had either a predecessor or a successor: and I think the contrary may be inferred—that the order centred in him. In this point of view he is a singular type of Him, who, in the nature of things, could have no predecessor, and can have no successor; because his priesthood, like himself, is eternal and unchangeable. Secondly, Melchisedec united the royal and priestly dignity; and therefore was a more complete type of Christ, than any persons, who held these high offices singly and separately.

3. He was to be a prophet—a Teacher. Under this title he was foretold by Moses. And the expectation that he should instruct the world was as universal as the anticipation of his arrival. The Woman of Samaria said, “I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ; when he is come he will tell us all things.” Jesus commenced this office, so soon as his public ministry began, and maintained it, till he left the world. Hence arose the conviction of Nicodemus—at once from his mighty works and from his wonderful words. “Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher sent from God.” Well he answered his character! The errors of man, guided only by nature and by reason, were disclosed and corrected, by this divine Instructor.



The obligations of the righteous law were explained and extended. The system of divine truth was revealed as perfectly as the present state of things will allow ; and the will of God explained to the human mind, so far as a finite capacity can contain and comprehend it. All that was discovered by his ministry, was also exemplified in his life, and became ratified by his death. Unbelief yielded to conviction ; hope succeeded fear ; joy chased despair ; and suspense was removed by persuasion. A new world presented itself before the man, and Jesus commanded him to arise and take possession. If instruction was to constitute one part of the character, and was to be one of the leading offices of the Messiah, on the testimony of prophecy, then is the evidence on the side of Jesus of Nazareth conclusive ; and we venture to ask the Jews, who admit the inspiration of their prophets, yet deny the claims of the Saviour, and profess to look for a Messiah still to come, when “ Messias cometh shall he do greater things “ than this man ? ” Can he furnish more exalted precepts ? will he afford clearer and more perfect instruction ? The fact is, Jesus has accomplished all that prophecy predicted of him, so far as his offices are concerned.

Here for the present we rest. We have now passed over all that is said in general respecting



the Messiah; and all that can be considered necessary as preliminary to the more particular investigation of those predictions which minutely relate to his life and character. These *remain* for discussion; and I have only to repeat this evening, that I consider the last and the present Lecture, as only introductory and preparatory, to the evidence of prophecy, in respect to the Redeemer, upon which we shall immediately enter, when we are permitted again to assemble together.



## LECTURE XI.

PROPHECIES RESPECTING THE MESSIAH  
CONTINUED.1 PET. i. 10—12.

*Of which salvation the prophets have inquired, and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified before hand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you, by them that have preached the gospel unto you, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.*

**I**N the divine character exists every possible attribute of excellence in it's full extent, and in it's utmost perfection. One man is wise and



another is strong ; one is learned and another is amiable ; one is distinguished by his rank, and another by his piety : it is no uncommon thing to find a separate good quality in the human mind ; sometimes a constellation of graces shine in one character ; and even to this occasionally power, wealth, and influence have been super-added ; but who that wears the fashion of a man concentrates in himself every excellence, and presents to the world ‘ virtue without alloy ?’ We must soar from this planet in search of such a Being, who exhibits the plenitude of perfection, and is all in all ; or, while we are bound to this terraqueous sphere, be content to trace his properties in his operations, to spell out his attributes in the dispensations of his providence, and to read his character more clearly in his most holy Word. It is our privilege to have access to the outline of Deity, thus revealed, at all times ; it is our duty to avail ourselves of this privilege, with frequency and constancy ; and the discharge of this duty will bring with it its own recompence. The object of our contemplation presents itself in points of view as various as they are striking ; and every survey discloses it with increased advantage. Every time we approach his glories, they blaze with augmented splendour ; every time we renew our converse with him, through the medium of this



volume, our conviction of his perfection becomes strengthened, enlarged, and established. We take an attribute separately, and follow it through the mazes of providence; conducted by the infallible guidance of revealed truth, we pursue the dark and solemn path without losing our way; we arrive at the point where it centres; we are overwhelmed with astonishment at the labyrinth which we have trodden, and at the scenes which we have witnessed in our course. Whoever shall consult the oracles of God, will never be at a loss to find exemplifications of the separate properties of justice and mercy; of purity and power; of wisdom and fidelity; and of all those perfections which make up the character of the Divinity. But to see them blended—this is the mystery of godliness—this, the grand scheme which heaven contemplates with wonder—this is the plan the parts of which were gradually unveiled to the prophets, and afterwards more fully reported to us in the gospel —“which things the angels desire to look into.” Attributes which contemplated singly seemed at variance, when they met melted into each other; like the colours of the rainbow, which preserve their distinction without destroying their unity. It is unnecessary to lead you through a long chain of historical events, and to examine it link by link, in order to illustrate the opera-



tion of any separate attribute, and thus gradually to learn the character of the whole, when one event presents itself, comprising all the perfections of God, and discovers them subsisting in complete and undisturbed harmony. In the provision for fallen man, what mercy! In the price which human redemption cost, what justice! In the person, and the character of our Substitute, what purity! In the circumstances attending the Life and the death of our Lord, what miraculous displays of power! In the scheme of salvation, what wisdom! In it's execution, what fidelity! In the whole, what unity! what beauty! what perfection!

We shall be able to pursue this delightful subject, in continuing this night our examination of the prophecies relative to the Messiah.

We have advanced so far as to lose sight of general predictions, and to arrive at those which are more explicit. The subject itself commands interest, even should it not be so happily treated as expectation requires. When Virgil embraced the universal opinion that, just at the time of our Lord's advent, some distinguished personage was about to appear, after describing the blessings of his reign in terms so corresponding with the Scriptures, that one is induced to conclude they were copied from the Hebrew prophets, he says, "O that the remnant of a



“ long life may yet be spared, and so much fire  
“ remain, as shall enable me to celebrate thy  
“ deeds!”—Shall Christians feel less anxiety to  
speak the praises of their Master, whose cha-  
racter infinitely excelled the imagination of the  
Roman poet? or professors exhibit less ardour  
than a heathen expressed, to declare the honour  
of his Majesty? The warrior, and the states-  
man, have always had a long train of admirers:  
nobility has never wanted a pen to record it’s  
glory, or a tongue to pay homage to it’s rank:  
history has consigned them to fame, and her  
sister poetry has lent her aid to write them on  
the pages of immortality. The sons of Science,  
of Distinction, and of Valour outlive their little  
day; and their names dwell on the tongue, ages  
after their ashes have mouldered in the sepul-  
chre! Is no remembrance due to him who  
“ liveth for ever and ever?” Shall it be pro-  
claimed before an earthly monarch, “ Bow the  
knee?” Shall flattery cry before human vanity,  
“ It is the voice of a God and not the voice of  
“ a man?” and shall no one step forward to give  
God the glory? The incense of praise offered  
to a fellow-creature is usually adulation. His  
titles frequently ascribe to him attributes which  
he does not possess. Tyranny sometimes is flat-  
tered with the appellation—*Most Gracious*—a  
man who violates every tie of nature, and breaks



through the wholesome restraints of society, may be found decorated with the splendid distinction of the *Right Honourable*—and a groveling, weak, debased mind, may, by the courtesy of the world, be called the *Most Noble*. What is this pageantry applied to the worthless, but splendid ignominy? We have paid homage to the dignity of Jesus Christ, and have found all his titles descriptive of his character; the most elevated of them the mere shadows of his native worth and excellence; and the whole infinitely short of his majesty. We have contemplated his high and glorious offices, and have seen human greatness, nay, the principalities of heaven, absorbed in his unrivalled superiority. As yet we have examined only general testimonies to the Messiah; it remains that we indulge ourselves at this time in contemplating those particulars which were revealed by the word of prophecy respecting His Birth, and His Life.

### I. HIS BIRTH.

Some predictions relate to the events which were to usher the Prince of Peace into the world, or immediately to precede his appearance, and to prepare the way before him: others particularize the circumstances of his birth, with a minuteness which cannot sufficiently be admired. The



best way of discovering the agreement of the prediction with the fact, will be to examine what the prophets teach us to expect relative to the Messiah, and by a comparison of their representations with events, to see how far they correspond, and to what extent they may be deemed accomplished.

1. Great convulsions were to prepare the way before the Messiah, whose presence was to be the pledge of peace. “For thus saith the Lord of hosts, yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land: and I will shake all nations, and the Desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts \*.” The metaphors of this prophecy are very sublime. We have seen the sea, wrought into tempest, rolling its billows fearfully upon the shore. We have seen the heavens covered with darkness, and have heard the voice of the thunder-storm bursting from cloud to cloud. We have heard of the ravages committed by the shock of a single earthquake, what time a whole city fell beneath the stroke of divine power, and ruin overspread the face of the country thus visited. How dreadful is any one of these evils! Its single opera-

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\* Haggai ii. 6, 7.



tion is sufficient to defy human prudence, to fill the heart with terror, and to dissolve the cords of life. But the imagery of this prophecy blends them all, as messengers before the face of nature's Lord. "For thus saith the Lord—I will  
" shake the heavens, and the earth, and the  
" sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all  
" nations"—as we have already explained, in noticing the style of prophecy, these figures may imply the agitation of the princes of this world, and the shocks which the empires should receive in their power by land and by sea. Alexander began to shake the kingdoms three centuries before the appearance of the Messiah. History says, that he visited Jerusalem, and that the high-priests shewed him the predictions of Daniel, as well relating to the future events to arise out of his vast empire, as to those transactions which were at that time going on, in which also he was the principal instrument of accomplishing the divine purpose. His mind appears to have been affected by this discovery; and that the impression was both deep and permanent, may be gathered from his treatment of the Jews, so foreign to his purpose. He marched to Jerusalem designing to destroy it: when he came there, after the chief-priest had this interview with him, he not only spared them, but showered upon them with a liberal hand



privileges and immunities. It is not improbable that the recollection of what he had read and heard from the book of Daniel on that memorable occasion, might influence his mind on his death-bed; for in his last moments he not only refused to name a successor to his vast empire, or to distribute it himself among his generals, but plainly alluded to the wars and divisions which should immediately succeed his decease. Be this as it may—it is a fact known to the whole world, that long and sanguinary contentions were kindled by this event; which ceased not to agitate and distract the world, till the mighty empire of Alexander was swallowed up by the prevailing majesty of Rome. It is equally beyond dispute, that the successive powers which mankind should obey, from the reign of Nebuchadnezzar to the coming of Christ, were all distinctly enumerated, together with their greater or less degree of stability, under different images, in the visions of the prophet Daniel. The amount of these predictions, as well as the history of those times, but amplify, while they abundantly confirm, the passage to which I am now directing your attention; and the nations were shaken, till the appearance of the Messiah, when the temple of Janus was shut, and universal tranquillity succeeded this tempest of contention.



Another remarkable circumstance in this passage is the name by which the Messiah is distinguished—"The Desire of all Nations." I will not now dwell upon the particulars revealed concerning him; which must, so far as they were understood, have kindled ardent hope and eager expectation. It is useless to reason upon hypothesis, when we are in possession of facts. Not merely the most enlightened of the Jews, were convinced, as his advent approached, that the time of his manifestation was at hand; but an extraordinary impression rested upon the whole Gentile world, that "Nature was about to bring forth a King." The poets imagined what would be the splendour and the blessings of his dominion; and the expectation crept into the sober pages of history. The attention of the wise men was awakened in the East. Impostors, availing themselves of the state of the public mind, deluded the people by usurping his name and his authority. And thus the Messiah was not merely the expectation of his *own*, but "the desire of *all* nations."

Another circumstance noted was, that he should at last appear without previous notice. This is distinctly marked by Malachi,—“The Lord whom ye seek shall *suddenly* come to his temple.”—What was the fact? He came so suddenly, that those who were looking for him



were taken by surprise, and knew him not. "He  
" came to his own, and his own received him  
" not." The time of his appearance was most  
accurately determined: for not to enter upon  
the calculations of Daniel, which will more suit-  
ably claim our notice at his death, it is express-  
ly decided by the passage already recited, that  
he was to appear before the destruction of the  
temple, which in the days of Haggai had it's  
foundation laid. "The Desire of all nations  
" shall come, and I will fill *this* house with  
" glory, saith the Lord of hosts."

2. A Forerunner was predicted, and his cha-  
racter and ministry clearly delineated, in a va-  
riety of prophecies.

This precursor was to be a prophet. A com-  
parison was instituted between John the Baptist;  
and his predecessors upon whom the prophetical  
spirit rested; and Jesus gives the preference to  
John, when he says, "What went ye out to  
" see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and  
" *more* than a prophet." In perfect consistence  
with this representation of our Lord, Malachi,  
who wrote four hundred years before the birth of  
this singular personage, speaks of him under the  
name of the most distinguished of all the Old  
Testament prophets. "Behold I will send be-  
" fore you *Elijah the prophet*, before the coming



“ of the great and dreadful day of the Lord \*” His father perfectly understood that the forerunner of the Messiah was to be thus gifted. “ Thou, child, shalt be called the *prophet* of the “ Highest.” This was not the fond dream of parental partiality : but the decided voice of prophecy for ages had been, that pre-eminent dignity should be attached to the man immediately and officially connected with the Messiah. The spirit of prophecy had ceased four centuries when he appeared. It’s revival was anticipated ; in the light that dawned upon the mind of his father, at his birth. And the full possession of it was an honour conferred upon the forerunner of Christ, worthy the occasion itself, and the transcendant dignity of his office. It would lead us too far, and in comparison of the more important business of this Lecture, it would be trifling with your time and patience, to run the parallel between the character of John and that of his type, Elijah. It is impossible to consider the life, and the ministry, of the one, and of the other, without perceiving, that they were actuated by the same lively zeal for God and his cause ; armed with the same unbending courage ; and that they cherished similar habits of self-denial and austerity. It was manifest, that not Elijah himself,

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\* Mal. iv. 5.



but some distinguished character who possessed “the spirit and power of Elias;” that not the person, but the office of the precursor of Jesus, was predicted; that every important particular was actually accomplished in John, which will be still more apparent as we pass on; “and if ye will receive it, *this* is Elias which was to come.”

He was to be a pioneer and a herald—first to clear the road, and then to announce the approach, of the Prince of Peace. So Isaiah spake, according to common calculation, seven hundred and twelve years before the prediction received its accomplishment in this great character; and the prophet united these offices. “The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a high-way for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it\*.”

With the last part of this beautiful passage we have nothing at present to do. Our immediate object is to trace the meaning, and the exact

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\* Is. xl. 3—5.



fulfilment of the first. The allusion is to the ancient practise of bodies of men preceding the monarch on his journey to clear the road—and others again to proclaim his titles. The first is, I believe, still practised in China, and the annunciation of his style is not yet laid aside in the East. In our own country the king has his pioneers for particular occasions. The Herald is also familiar to us, although the custom of crying before the monarch prevails not among us.

Permit me for a few moments to dwell upon this most impressive and sublime prediction. Every member of every sentence conveys, either expressed or implied, some important sentiment to the heart.—“The voice of him that crieth”—The man is lost in his message. He is introduced without a name—it was unnecessary—he would be sufficiently marked and distinguished by his employment. The prophet is concealed, with matchless effect, behind the design of this appearance. No description is afforded of his talents or his attainments: because, great although he was to be, he could reflect no glory upon his office, but was himself to be irradiated and ennobled by it. The prophet directs us this evening how to moderate and to prosecute our inquiries. We come not up to gaze upon “a man clothed in soft raiment,” such as is worn



“ in kings’ palaces:” or to see him rudely clad in a vest of “ camels’ hair, with a leathern girdle “ about his loins”—these are mere circumstances, worthy our transient regard only as they are significant in an inferior measure—we go not forth, in fact, to look upon John, but, in him, to trace the features, and to learn the character, of the Forerunner of the Lord.

*He cried*—audibly and earnestly. His was not the cold, dull, unimpassioned and sleepy harangue, of a man who is indifferent to the cause which he professes to defend. He was impressed with a sense of the weight and importance of his message: set apart to his office, he was furnished with powers equal to the full, the honourable, the useful discharge of it; and was anxiously concerned to exert himself to the utmost in order to fulfil the trust committed to him. Such was to be the Herald of the Messiah; such ought to be the ministers of Jesus Christ. You will determine, whether John was the faithful, laborious, diligent messenger, which this passage supposes.

He literally cried “ in the wilderness”—for that was the scene of his public preaching. His proclamation was to consist of so many distinct parts. He was to proclaim the dignity of the person whom he preceded; and whom the prophet calls, in the character of the precursor,



“ the Lord”—and “ our God.” Thus actually did John, when he testified “ He that cometh “ after me, is preferred before me, whose shoes’ “ latchet I am not worthy to unloose.”—He was to announce his coming—and the removal of obstacles; nay, he was himself to prepare the way for the Messiah; and he accomplished his mission when he preached so earnestly, “ Repent “ ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand”—when he cried before him, “ Behold, the Lamb “ of God, that taketh away the sin of the “ world!” and thus he was to pass on, to the splendour, the extent, the stability, and the certainty of the Saviour’s spiritual empire. But as this extends beyond our present purpose, we relinquish it to shew,

3. That the circumstances of the Birth of the Messiah were all minutely foretold. As it was expressly ordained that he should descend from the house of David, the Evangelists have distinctly marked that important circumstance in their genealogies\*. And as exactly for this purpose the strict care which the Jews took of their genealogies was necessary, so exactly to this point, and no further, did it extend. When Jesus appeared, and had received this evidence of his Messiah-ship, the value of such records

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\* See the Note.



ceased, and with it their existence: for since the great dispersion of this nation by the Romans they are lost, and his tribe is altogether unknown to every Jew now in existence.—This is, however, a very general feature in prophecy: those which remain are more distinct and particular.

He was to be born of a Virgin. “Hear ye  
“ now, O house of David—the Lord himself  
“ shall give you a sign—Behold, a Virgin shall  
“ conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call his  
“ name Immanuel.” Without entering into a discussion of this mysterious subject, (the veracity of which is not at all affected by the circumstance that it exceeds our comprehension) it is manifest, that the voice of prophecy, required the Messiah to make his entrance into the world, in a manner as miraculous as the Evangelists say he actually did. It is also evident, that whatever other interpretation may be given of the bearings of this passage in it’s connection, the language which I have read you must have referred to the Messiah ultimately and explicitly, not merely from the application of it to him in the Gospel of Saint Matthew, but because in respect of no other person was it, or could it be, ever literally fulfilled. Thus are two particulars of his birth plainly indicated; and a third circumstance is no less clearly predicted:



He was to be born at Bethlehem. “Thou, “Bethlehem-Ephratah, though thou be little “among the thousands of Judah, yet out of “thee shall HE come forth unto me that is to “be ruler in Israel: whose goings forth have “been of old, from everlasting.” Joseph, his reputed father, and Mary his espoused wife, were resident at Nazareth; when a decree of the Roman Emperor for a general enrollment, called them from their obscurity to Bethlehem, the city of David, according to the purpose of the Monarch, that every man should be entered after his tribe and his family; and then, and there, was Jesus born, according to the previously-formed arrangements of prophecy.

Predictions were no less multiplied and no less explicit, respecting,

## II. HIS LIFE.

We learn the mildness and the perfection of his character. “Behold my servant whom I “uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delight- “eth: I have put my spirit upon him, he shall “bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He “shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice “to be heard in the street. A bruised reed “shall he not break: and the smoking flax shall “he not quench.” In the meekness and gentle-



ness of Jesus Christ; in his sufferance of wrong, and his patient perseverance in well-doing; in his unassuming disposition; and in his tenderness towards every human want and every human infirmity, as well of mind as of body; we find the counter-part of this most affecting representation.

His benevolent employment, and his faithful discharge of his office, is exhibited under the image of a shepherd. “He shall feed his flock  
“ like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with  
“ his arm and carry them in his bosom, and shall  
“ gently lead those that are with young.” And with what compassion he regarded the people! with what kindness he instructed them! When he came nigh to the city that refused him, he beheld, and wept over it!—

His coming was to be a distinguished blessing to the world. “O Zion, that bringest good  
“ tidings, get thee up into the high mountain:  
“ O Jerusalem that bringest good tidings, lift  
“ up thy voice with strength: lift it up, be not  
“ afraid: say unto the cities of Judah, Behold  
“ your God!”—In correspondence with this prophetic testimony, the angels announced to the Shepherds, “Behold I bring you good tidings  
“ of great joy, which shall be to all people.  
“ For unto you is born this day in the city of  
“ David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”



The effects of his kingdom upon the natural and moral world at it's first establishment; and the nature of those miracles which should accompany his preaching, were all the subjects of distinct and luminous prediction. "Then  
 " the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the  
 " ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then  
 " shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the  
 " tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilder-  
 " ness shall waters break out and streams in the  
 " desert." There cannot be a more affecting sight than that of a man groping at noon-day  
 " in darkness, and with dangers compassed  
 " round, and solitude!" He has eyes indeed, but

" Eyes that roll in vain  
 " To find the piercing ray, and find no dawn:  
 " So thick a drop serene hath quench'd their orbs,  
 " Or dim suffusion veil'd."

" Thus with the year  
 " Seasons return, but not to him, returns  
 " Day, or the sweet approach of ev'n, or morn,  
 " Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,  
 " Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;  
 " But cloud instead, and ever-during dark  
 " Surrounds him; from the cheerful ways of men  
 " Cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair  
 " Presented with an universal blank  
 " Of nature's works, to him expung'd and raz'd,  
 " And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out."



This class of human misery arrested the attention of the Saviour; and he furnished repeatedly evidences of his Messiah-ship, by opening the eyes of the blind. In like manner he restored the withered arm, the palsied limb, or the impotent frame. With a sublimity not inferior to the fiat by which he commanded universal nature to rise, he said to the deaf, “be opened”—and the man heard; and at the same time the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake; and they that beheld were beyond measure astonished, saying, “He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.”—

The very manner of his riding in triumph into Jerusalem was the subject of a distinct and impressive prophecy. “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy king cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.” I need not remind you that our Lord literally thus rode into Jerusalem, while his disciples spread their garments in the way; and the multitude scattered branches before him; and children cried, Hosanna; and the scribes and pharisees looked on with astonishment and with indignation. But it is worthy your notice, that both in the prophecy and in the event, while a



triumph was announced on the part of the Messiah, it was so conducted, and was accompanied with such circumstances, that it diminished nothing from the humility and meekness of his character; nor clashed with other predictions relating to his mild and unassuming manners. If he appeared as the King of Zion, he was still “lowly.”

Now the most extraordinary circumstance relating to his life is, that after all this fulness of evidence, together with the general expectation of the Messiah awakened and kept alive, he should be unknown and rejected. One should have concluded, that the people to whom the lively oracles of God were committed, would at once have traced the resemblance between Jesus of Nazareth and the Messiah of their prophets.

It was perfectly reasonable to expect that his mighty works would have spoken for him; that the exact and perpetual fulfilment of predictions, so well known and constantly read in their synagogues, could not have failed to arrest their attention and to seal their conviction; and that every heart in the Jewish nation would have been open and prepared for his reception. But “how then should the scriptures have been fulfilled?” This very singular and affecting circumstance of his life, is that which of all others, is most amply dilated, most frequently pressed, most



distinctly urged in the prophetic writings. He *was* to be this obscure, insulted, suffering character, from the beginning to the close of his days. He was neither to be admired nor acknowledged at his birth, or in the early part of his life. “For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness: and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.” The prophets anticipated the little conviction that should rise out of their testimony. “Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?”—Affliction was to drive her ploughshare over his countenance; and sorrow to be the sad companion of his journey through this vale of tears. “Many were astonished at him! his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men.” “He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not—we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.” Still more than this, he speaks of that obstinate rejection of him which characterizes the Jews to this day. “Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive



“ not. Make gross the heart of this people,  
“ and make their ears heavy, and close up their  
“ eyes: lest they see with their eyes, and hear  
“ with their ears, and understand with their  
“ hearts, and be converted, and be healed.”

Such was the general character of the Jewish nation in reference to all their judgments and to all their mercies; to all their privileges and to all their instructions: but the accomplishment of this language is most complete in their treatment of Jesus Christ. So that the rejection of the Saviour by his own nation, was as essential to prove the Messiah-ship, as any other evidence whatever deducible from prophecy; and the present blindness and state of Israel stands a permanent memorial to this very age in which we live, both of the truth of prophecy, and of the just pretensions of Jesus: for such the Messiah was to be, and thus was he to be treated.

Your time is too far advanced to allow us to pursue further this subject, or to enter upon another. We cannot at present pass beyond the particular predictions relating to the Life of Christ: the next Lecture will, if God permit, comprise his sufferings and exaltation; and conclude the prophecies respecting the Messiah.

In the mean time allow me to ask, what attractions the Saviour possesses for you? The



Jews rejected, but do you receive him? The prophets call him the Desire of all nations; and in himself he is an object infinitely desirable. What are the traits of character which you have been accustomed to admire and love? Are they those which alone stamp dignity upon human nature, and best distinguish man from the brute creation? Are they those emanations of Deity which sin extinguished at the fall, and which the transactions of Calvary restored in all their former excellence—in all their pristine beauty—in all their primeval splendour—in all their ancient grandeur and majesty? Do you indeed venerate purity of character, benevolence of life, holiness of conversation, tenderness of heart? Ah, see them most conspicuous, most pre-eminent, most permanent, in the object this night presented to your contemplation. Is your heart formed for friendship? Are you cast in the mould of social affections? Do you love the domestic circle? Do you prize above the world's wealth, a faithful bosom upon which you may repose your head; a faithful ear into which you may pour your feelings; a faithful heart, which will throb with your anxieties, and exult in your joys? Behold here, “a friend that loveth at all times—a brother born for adversity—a friend that sticketh closer than a brother;” and “in all our afflictions he was afflicted.”



“ He in the days of feeble flesh,  
“ Pour’d out his cries and tears;  
“ And in his measure feels afresh  
“ What every member bears !”

Are you a sinner overwhelmed with the sad conviction of guilt and of misery? Is it all fear without, and conflict within? Does your conscience testify against you, and your heart condemn you? Does the sentence of impartial justice against all transgression roll in thunder over your head? Look up, trembling spirit! The voice of Jesus can hush this tempest. The smiles of his face will disperse these threatening clouds. Tranquillity shall break through them, and shine once more upon thy troubled heart. Hope, and faith, and joy, shall supplant fear, and unbelief, and anguish, when he says, “ Go  
“ in peace, thy sins are forgiven thee!”



## NOTES.

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### NOTES TO LECTURE THE ELEVENTH.

**RESPECTING** the genealogy of our Lord, the Writers of the Ancient Univ. Hist. have the following remarks.

“ The Jews had a law which expressly forbad heiresses to marry  
 “ out of their own tribes. It is true the Virgin Mary seems to have  
 “ been far enough from being one of that sort, at least in possession,  
 “ whatever she might be in reversion, or by virtue of their jubilee  
 “ laws, according to which all lands and inheritances were to revolve  
 “ to the original owner, or to his next heir or heiress. But there  
 “ was still a much greater tie, which kept the virgins of the tribe of  
 “ Judah, but especially those of the house of David, from marry-  
 “ ing into another tribe or family, namely the sure expectation they  
 “ had, that the Messiah was to be of that lineage, and to be born  
 “ in Bethlehem, the city and patrimony of that monarch; and how  
 “ careful every family was to preserve their genealogy, needs not to  
 “ be repeated.

“ It is therefore in vain that the Jews exclaim against the uncer-  
 “ tainty of Christ’s being of the seed of David, because Joseph’s  
 “ and not Mary’s genealogy is deduced from him by the two Evan-  
 “ gelists, who is yet affirmed by them to have had no share in his  
 “ conception. The certainty of the virgin’s descent from that house  
 “ is rendered evident enough by what we observed above, especially  
 “ if we add the testimony of the Evangelists themselves, who call  
 “ her miraculous child, the son or descendant of David. If it be  
 “ asked why they chose rather to give us that of her husband? it  
 “ may be answered, that they conformed in it to the custom of the  
 “ Hebrews, and even of the sacred writers, who deduce their gene-



“alogies from the male rather than the female line; for if Christ  
 “the son of Mary was the son or descendant of David, it must follow  
 “that his mother must be so too.

“But the greater difficulty is, to reconcile the variations of the  
 “two genealogies of St. Matthew and St. Luke, and we much ques-  
 “tion whether the greater part of our readers would care to have  
 “all repeated that has been said on that subject, though in ever so  
 “succinct an epitome, especially considering that the point has not  
 “been so sufficiently cleared hitherto, as to leave no room for fresh  
 “cavils and objections, &c.

“First, then, we beg leave to observe, that the titles of father  
 “and son, as well as the terms to beget and be begotten, in the lan-  
 “guage of scripture, do not always imply an immediate, but fre-  
 “quently a remote, succession. Hence the phrase often used by  
 “Moses, *when thou shalt hereafter beget children, and children’s*  
 “*children*, and the name of father and son given to a predecessor  
 “or successor at the distance of two, three, or more generations,  
 “as will more fully appear by the sequel. This being premised,  
 “will serve as the basis to the following remarks on the subject of  
 “these two gospel genealogies.

“1. St. Matthew gives one genealogy, and St. Luke another, and  
 “both in some names vary from the Old Testament.

“2. St. Matthew, who begins his from Abraham, divides it into  
 “42 successions, called by him generations; that is,

|             |                         |
|-------------|-------------------------|
| “ 14 before | } the regal government. |
| “ 14 under  |                         |
| “ 14 after  |                         |

“3. The first 14 are the same with those of the Old Test. and  
 “in St. Luke.

“4. The next 14 in St. Matt. contain the legal succession of the  
 “line of Solomon, until its extinction in Jechoniah, al. Coniah and  
 “Jehoiachim, when the line of Nathan, the son of David and bro-  
 “ther of Solomon, took place.

“5. The inheritance in the Jewish polity being unalienable far-  
 “ther than the Jubilee, as was before hinted, and then revolving to  
 “the next surviving heir, the latter though at some distance from  
 “the former, was called the son, that is properly the successor of  
 “the former. Thus Salathiel, who by St. Luke’s genealogy appears  
 “to have been the descendant of Nathan the son of David, is by



“ St. Matt. said to be begotten by Jechoniah, the last of the Solo-  
“ monic line, because he was the next surviving heir of the house of  
“ David after Jechoniah’s death. Had not therefore Solomon’s line  
“ been set down, and the end thereof noted, it could not have ap-  
“ peared from St. Luke, how Salathiel came by his title of succes-  
“ sion; for the line of Nathan could not have any claim to it, whilst  
“ that of Solomon subsisted, unless in an uncertain reversion; and  
“ this will account for the difference between St. Luke and St. Matt.  
“ in these middle 14 generations.

“ 6. But there is likewise in this latter succession a manifest va-  
“ riation as to the number from the books of the Old Test. It has  
“ indeed been solved, by saying that the Evangelist, aiming only at  
“ the three round numbers of 14 generations above-mentioned, had  
“ overlooked or purposely passed by some of the redundant ones;  
“ and this answer hath hitherto passed for correct.

“ But the difference seems to arise from something more mate-  
“ rial, than the bare aim at an equality of numbers. The historical  
“ books set down all the kings in general that had reigned from  
“ David to Jechoniah; but St. Matt. as a genealogist, seems to take  
“ notice only of those who had a legal title, and to omit the others;  
“ of this latter sort we take Ahaziah the son of Jehoram by Athalich  
“ to have been, who is said to have been made king by the inha-  
“ bitants of Jerusalem upon his father’s death, because his eldest  
“ brother had been killed by the Philistines, which seems to inti-  
“ mate that they had chosen him in lieu of some infant son of his  
“ deceased brother. For had not this been the case, he would have  
“ succeeded of course, without the people’s choice. In the same  
“ class we may put Joash, who succeeded his father Ahaziah, and  
“ Amaziah the son of Joash, all who might succeed each other in  
“ prejudice to the elder branch, till this being extinct, made way  
“ for the younger in Usiah or Osias, the son of Amaziah, who is  
“ therefore called by the Evangelist the son, that is, as we have  
“ hinted above, the successor of Jehoram, though at the distance of  
“ three generations above-mentioned.

“ Thus again Zedekiah, who was set up by the king of Babylon  
“ in prejudice of his elder brother Jechoniah, is likewise omitted  
“ by the Evangelist. Now when these irregular successions are  
“ taken away, there will remain but the same 14, which are men-  
“ tioned in his genealogy.



“7. The next variation between the two Evangelists is in the  
 “last 14 generations, and rises from the one’s constant care of  
 “pointing out the passing of the inheritance as far as it goes in the  
 “elder branch. They both agree as far as Zerubbabel, after which  
 “St. Matt. goes on with Abiud and his heirs down to Eleazer, where  
 “the line of Abiud ends; and then he sets down as his son and  
 “successor Matthan, who is by St. Luke mentioned under the  
 “name of Matthat, and was of the line of Rhesa, the son of Ze-  
 “rubbabel. So that he entered into the regular succession, after  
 “the extinction of that of Abiud.

“Thus again, Matthat or Matthan dying childless, Eli was ob-  
 “liged, according to the Mosaic law, to take his wife and raise up  
 “seed to him, and by him begot Joseph the husband of Mary, who  
 “according to the same law, was still reputed the son of the dead  
 “elder brother. For this reason St. Matt. rightly calls him the son  
 “of Jacob; whereas St. Luke, who did not proceed on the same  
 “method, calls him the son of Eli. The first gives the name of his  
 “legal, the other of his natural father.

“St. Matt. might in all probability have fetched his genealogy from  
 “the records of Bethlehem, the patrimony of David, and wherein  
 “therefore none were entered, but such as by a regular lineal de-  
 “scent were in actual possession of it; and where the younger  
 “branch, though in actual possession of the crown, could not be  
 “regularly inrolled, as long as there was any heir of the elder left  
 “alive, or till such time as this latter failed. St. Luke, on the other  
 “hand, who, as he tells us in the Preface to his Gospel, proposed  
 “to supply such defects as he found in those who had writ the His-  
 “tory of Jesus Christ before him, fearing lest these omissions should  
 “cause some confusion, for want of pointing out when the younger  
 “succeeded the elder branch, has recourse to the book of Chroni-  
 “cles, where the series of the successions, both regular and irregu-  
 “lar, legal and illegal, are exhibited. So that both had their ge-  
 “nealogies from the most authentic, though different records, and  
 “scrupulously adhered each to his own, according to the scheme  
 “they had in view, and consequently, instead of clashing, do more  
 “probably clear and confirm each other.

“There is still one difficulty left with respect to St. Luke’s genea-  
 “logy, viz. his introducing of Cainan in the line of Shem, adding



“ thereto one generation, contrary to the Hebrew text in Genesis  
“ and the Chronicles, and all the versions of it, except the Septua-  
“ gint; contrary to the concurring testimony of Josephus, Philo,  
“ and other Jewish doctors, as well as to that of the ancient fa-  
“ thers; all who not only omit Cainan’s name, but reckon only ten  
“ generations from Noah to Abraham, whereas with this there  
“ would be eleven.

“ This difference has given more pains to Commentators to recon-  
“ cile, than we think it deserved, considering the likelihood there is  
“ of it’s having been jumbled into St. Luke’s text, by the carelessness  
“ of the transcribers, there being another Cainan mentioned in the  
“ verse immediately following, which might be also according to the  
“ old close way of writing, in the very next line. But allowing it to  
“ have been originally in St. Luke, it is plain, he must have had it  
“ out of the Septuagint, which version both he and the other Sacred  
“ Writers his cotemporaries used, and the copy which he then had  
“ might have been corrupted after the same careless manner; for it  
“ doth not appear, that all the copies of that version had this name,  
“ else it would be found in all the Latin versions of it, as well as in  
“ Josephus, Philo, and the fathers; and then they must have rec-  
“ koned eleven instead of ten generations.

“ The same may be said even on the supposition, that it was ori-  
“ ginally put in by the seventy interpreters; for as neither they,  
“ nor the transcribers of the Hebrew copy, which they took with  
“ them into Egypt, were infallible (at least we think we have  
“ made it appear that they were not, when we spoke of their ver-  
“ sion) how easily might that word have crept into the text by their  
“ inadvertency.

“ But if all this will not satisfy the scrupulous, what we have ob-  
“ served above of the distinction of natural and legal parents will  
“ easily remove the difficulty; so that Arphaxad might be the natu-  
“ ral father of Sala, and the legal one of Cainan, or *vice versâ*.  
“ There is therefore no need of having recourse, as some have done,  
“ to injurious suppositions against the Jews, as if they had purposely  
“ scratched out the name of Cainan in their Hebrew copies, that  
“ they might take occasion to cry down the Septuagint version;  
“ much less to other more violent means, to account for so small a  
“ variation, which, for aught appears to the contrary, was occasion-



“ed by the mere oversight of a transcriber, and, the more probably of St. Luke’s own copy, than of either the original or Greek version.”

*Anc. Univ. Hist. vol. x. B. i. Chap. 11. p. 331—335. Note Q. Dublin Edit. 1745.*

After so long an extract, to reconcile the account which the Evangelists have given of the genealogy of our Lord, I can do no more than refer the reader, respecting the descent of Jesus, from the house of David by his *mother’s* side, to the facts stated by Dr. Allix in his reflections on the books of the New Testament, chapter the seventh, and to the admirable train of reasoning which he establishes on those facts. This work has been, I believe, recently republished in a separate form; the way in which I have access to it, is in Bishop Watson’s Theological Tracts; and the part to which I refer is, vol. i. p. 452. Some judicious criticism on these genealogies may also be found in the Notes of Dr. Doddridge’s Family Expositor *in locum*, Vol. I. It is rather wearisome to wade through so much as has been written upon a subject so little interesting in itself; but the tedium is corrected by the recollection of it’s importance, as to the consequences deducible from it.



## LECTURE XII.

PROPHECIES RESPECTING THE MESSIAH  
CONCLUDED.

LUKE XVI. 31.

*If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.*

WE usually form our judgment of actions, from their splendour rather than from their utility. We are apt to be dazzled by magnificence of appearance, without inquiring after the intrinsic value of the object admired; and we are guided by adventitious and imposing circumstances, in forming our decisions upon any subject, more frequently, than by it's native dignity and importance. In judging of human characters, we are necessarily compelled to reason upon that which is external: to gather motives from actions, to rise from effects to causes, and



from conduct to argue principles. Unable to read the heart, or to penetrate the veil that covers the latent but powerful springs of human operation, we know others only as they seem, not as they are. But we carry this principle too frequently beyond necessity. When we might have opportunity of deciding upon something more satisfactory than mere appearance, we neither seek nor embrace the occasion: we rather court that which accommodates itself to the senses, to the passions, even to our infirmities, than that which is addressed to the reason, to the understanding and to the conscience. The eye, in a flower-garden, overlooks the violet, and is arrested by the tulip: because the one courts us with all the luxuriance of lovely and dazzling colours, and the other is modestly satisfied with diffusing fragrance around it, without pressing to be seen. Worth seldom asks a witness of it's excellence, and often therefore loses it's just applause. Those actions which attract universal notice, and succeed in obtaining general admiration, not merely have frequently little intrinsic value, but are little more than splendid vices. In the estimation of God, he, whom the world almost worship as a Saviour, is found a destroyer. We regard persons and things through the medium of prejudice arising from our situation in respect of them: could we shift



our station, or the medium through which we behold them, we should generally find the excellencies or defects ascribed to them, by the partialities of our sentiments of regard or of aversion, magnified beyond all just proportion, and all real existence. Thus the man whom one nation regards as an object all-glorious, is to another inexpressibly vile: both speak and judge according to their interest, and their particular relation to him: both are partly right and partly wrong: he has good and bad qualities—but in a serious point of view, by parties altogether unconcerned, if such can be, a conqueror must of necessity be a curse: because he depresses one class of his brethren of mankind as much as he elevates unduly another. The orb which rises upon one quarter of the globe as a Sun, blasts the other as a meteor: the beams which afford to one favoured spot vitality and nutrition, shed upon the rest blight and mortality. Yet these are the objects that excite attention, and command superior respect!—On the contrary, a life of usefulness terminating in a death of ignominy—a Saviour, wearing the form of a servant—tabernacled almost unknown among us—was noticed only to be persecuted, and closed the scene of his sufferings amidst the brutal shouts of unfeeling multitudes, whose peace was purchased by his agonies!



On matters of mere opinion, the sentiments of different persons will be as various as their characters. Subjects which appear to one mind self-evident, present themselves to another clouded with doubt, and surrounded by insuperable difficulties. Reasoning, which one man considers conclusive and irresistible, another regards as defective, inconsistent, and unsatisfactory. But there are certain points on which all men agree: there are truths which are universally admitted; and should any one attempt to deny them, he would be deemed, by common consent, a madman. No one doubts the existence of light: no one denies the shining of the sun: no one questions objects presented to the senses. Yet the medium of the senses is imperfect. Their evidence is sometimes false. They may be imposed upon, and frequently are so. They may become disordered, and transmit an image to the mind, far from a correct resemblance to the object of which it is professedly a type. It is also a medium which may be destroyed; an evidence which may be removed. Truths built upon a firmer basis than the testimony of the senses, are rejected. And such is human inconsistency, that when religious truth avails itself of the evidence of the senses—evidence on every other occasion admitted as demonstration—the testimony itself is questioned, and the fair deduc-



tions from it, are rejected. Revelation appeals to the senses for the good produced by its influences; appeals to superstition destroyed, and to institutions of mercy erected; to altars stained with human blood overthrown, and to principles of humanity, of peace, of benevolence, of piety, established—appeals to the eye and to the ear, to the understanding and to the heart, to the reason and to the conscience—and frequently appeals in vain!—The apostles appealed to that “which was from the beginning, which they had heard, which they had seen with their eyes, which they had looked upon, which their hands had handled of the word of life”—and their testimony was not received, their evidence is still rejected. Prophecy gives her powerful aid: but we are “still slow of heart to believe.” What more can be required? “If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe though one rose from the dead.” This evidence was actually afterwards superadded—and the hardness of heart, in those to whom it was given, still remained.

This night we conclude the prophecies respecting the Messiah; and our present object is, to compare the facts with the predictions which relate to his sufferings, and his exaltation.

We have already seen, that, although he was the expectation of successive ages from the very



beginning of time: although grand events of providence levelled the mountains and filled up the vallies before him: although his herald whose office, nay his very language, was foretold, preceded him—the eyes of men were holden that they should not know him. And this was necessary, in the first instance, to fulfil the language of prophecy itself, which had affirmed that so it should be: and principally, to carry into effect the great purposes of God relative to human redemption. Thus, while his murderers obeyed no impulse but that of their depraved passions, consulted no interest, sought no end but the gratification of their own malignity, acted under the domination of no principle but the tide of their prejudices, and were impelled to rise up against the Saviour by no other force than their own free choice, they were still, without design and without constraint, doing “whatsoever the hand and the counsel of God determined before to be done.” We may also, from the clue afforded us of the character of the Jewish nation, trace the progress of their conduct towards our Lord, from it’s commencement in the bitterness of defeated expectations, to it’s dreadful consummation in the murder of him, whom they allowed, and were compelled to allow, to the very last moment, a just and innocent person. Filled with prepossessions in favour of



external greatness, they forgot that the King Messiah was to be "meek and lowly," obscure and afflicted; and thus, in the rage of the disappointment, contributed to make him the neglected, injured, oppressed character, for which they despised him, and in so doing placed the evidences of his claims upon an unshaken basis, and armed all the representations of their own prophets against themselves. They looked for a hero clothed in the thunder of power to extirpate their conquering adversaries: what then was their indignation when Jesus appeared, without any of these warlike qualities? and, still more than this, utterly disclaiming them? It was seen at once, that he was formed to bless with peace the turbulent nations, and not to rekindle among them the slumbering fires of war. They heard him decry such a domination as they affected, and affirm that his empire was in the heart. They soon perceived, by his preaching, that it was his glorious triumph to subdue the rebel affections, and not to drag the wretched captive at the wheels of his chariot. His proud countrymen, who had ill-brooked their servitude, turned, with disdain, from a Saviour, who declined to break from their shoulders a yoke of temporal submission to the Romans; and whose sole object it was to release the slave of sin from his worse than adamantine fetters.



In vain the tempest was hushed before him into peace, and the winds, and the waves, yielded him obedience. In vain diseases, and death itself, acknowledged his undisputed authority, and the very body consigned four days to the sepulchre, upon which the dishonours of mortality were already known to have taken place, became re-animated. They would not have him to reign over them. They hated him the more for his works. They followed him with cruel malice through his ministry; and finally closed their persecutions by staining their hands with the blood of innocence. This is the scene this night to be unveiled; we are to trace the sufferings of Christ through their last agonies, and to listen to the voice of prophecy respecting the time, the place, the manner, the miracles and the design of his death.

1. The time of the appearance and of the sufferings of the Messiah had been so clearly predicted, that calculations were made with a degree of nicety and certainty unrivalled, which were fully established by the event itself, and which even the Jews did not deny, till it became necessary, as a justification of their unreasonable prejudices against Christ, and as a plea for the obstinacy, which in defiance of all evidence continues to reject him. I may go further—the term, fixed for the appearance of the Messiah,



by the prophet Daniel, is still allowed to have been exactly that period in which Jesus lived and died; and they excuse themselves from admitting the force of this fact, when it is urged against them, by saying, that the calculation is indeed accurate, but that the coming of the Messiah is delayed on account of their sins. This is the remarkable testimony of prophecy to an event in itself still more extraordinary. “Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, unto Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks; and threescore and two weeks the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come, shall destroy the city, and the sanctuary, and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week; and in the midst of the week



“ he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to  
“ cease, and for the overspreading of abomina-  
“ tions he shall make it desolate, even until the  
“ consummation, and that determined, shall be  
“ poured upon the desolate.” This explicit  
prediction contains many distinct features, of  
which it is practicable at this moment to mark  
only the most prominent. The design of the  
Messiah’s appearance is stated with a clearness  
worthy the writings of even a New Testament  
apostle, and cannot sufficiently excite our admi-  
ration—“ to make an end of sins—to make re-  
“ conciliation for iniquity—and to bring in  
“ everlasting righteousness.” This grand object  
will hereafter form a separate branch of the dis-  
cussion of this Lecture. Then the strong ex-  
pression—“ Messiah shall be cut off”—supposes  
that he was to fall by violence—and will be  
seen to agree with facts when the manner of his  
death is considered. But the time ordained was  
“ threescore and two weeks”—and the date by  
which the computation is to be made—“ from  
“ the going forth of the commandment to re-  
“ store and to build Jerusalem.” Prophetic  
weeks are understood in this, as in all similar  
cases, to intend weeks of years—that is to say,  
every day is placed for a year; and the calcula-  
tion proceeds upon the number of days to be  
found in threescore and two weeks, the sum of



which will give us the number of years from the period assigned to the accomplishment of the prediction. Having obtained, by these means, four hundred and ninety years, we examine how far the fact will be found to correspond with the prophecy. From the decree granted by Artaxerxes in the seventh year of his reign to Ezra, for the restoration of the ruined fortunes of his country, to the death of Christ, are exactly four hundred and ninety years. The learned and accurate Dr. Prideaux has established, that the event corresponded with the prediction precisely, "to a month. For in the month, Nisan, " was the decree granted to Ezra; and in the " middle of the same month, Nisan, Christ suffered, just four hundred and ninety years " after." He was " crucified in the beginning " of the Jewish passover, which always commenced in the middle of the month Nisan\*."

But the fact is marked, with equal distinctness, by the events which were immediately to follow. The " city and the sanctuary" were to be " destroyed"—and ruin and " desolation", to rush upon it like an " inundation." How surely this succeeded the crucifixion of our Lord, and how dreadfully correct is the terrible image of a flood, in describing so fearful a devastation,

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\* Prid. Connec. Part i. vol. ii. book v. p. 414.



will be seen in our future consideration of the destruction of Jerusalem. The "sacrifice and the oblation" was to "cease." This is one of the most decisive and impressive evidences of the truth of prophecy that can even be demanded. It stands, the permanent memorial, at once of divine fidelity, and of the inspiration of these writings, to this hour. It is a fact which cannot be controverted; and this early prediction of it, and of the time when it should take place, defies the struggles of scepticism to shake its authority. We have seen the whole world, acting as by one impulse, presenting sacrifices, as a propitiation for offence, to the Deity: we see the whole world, by common consent, after the offering of the body of Jesus once for all, abandoning, almost at the same time, their universal principle, and discontinuing them. We see the Jews, tenacious beyond all measure of their rites and ceremonies, in their zeal to preserve them, crucifying the Lord of Life: we see this very people, as an immediate consequence, driven from their country, the very rites which they dyed their hands in blood to secure, abolished; and from that hour to the present the daily sacrifice has ceased, according to the prediction of their own prophet.

2. The place was not indeed the subject of direct prophecy, but was indirectly shadowed



out, in the custom of offering up, whatever animal was according to divine appointment to be considered as a "sin-offering," "without the camp." Thus the apostle also speaks—"the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high-priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." Golgotha, or Calvary, where our Lord was crucified, was a rocky hill on the western side of Jerusalem, used as a place of execution,\* and at length becoming a sort of charnel-house, received the titles by which it is distinguished in the gospels, and which signify *the place of a scull*. While we are taught to consider the place of our Lord's sufferings as marked out early in the rites of the former dispensation, we see the Jews in this, as in every other instance, fulfilling the prediction without having any such intention. In crucifying our Lord "without the gate," they were only acting on their invariable habit, never to suffer a malefactor to be put to death within the city. Having first falsely accused, and afterwards unjustly condemned him, as an offender, they led him forth to execution, under the name of a criminal, to the spot where criminals suffered; thus they were actually, although ignorantly, first treating him



like the heifer and scape goat, as a propitiatory victim, and afterwards leading him forth to the very place where all such victims were offered.

3. The manner of his death, is so largely detailed, and so minutely described, that it can be necessary to do little more, than place before you the various particulars relating to it, to be found in the prophets, without comment. He was to be betrayed and *sold*—Zechariah personifying the Saviour says—“they weighed for “my price thirty pieces of silver\*.” exactly the sum for which Judas covenanted, and which he received, as the execrable reward of treachery. Well might the prophet exclaim, “A goodly “price that I was prized at of them!”—And the use that was made of this hire of unrighteousness was foreseen and foretold. “And the Lord “said unto me, cast it unto the potter—and I “took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them “to the potter, in the house of the Lord.” Thus Judas “cast down the thirty pieces of silver in “the temple”—and the money was applied to the purchase of “the potter’s field,” and from the combination of circumstances attending the whole transaction, it was called, and retained the title, “Aceldama,” “the field of blood.” He was to be *forsaken* by his disciples. “I look-

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\* Zech. xi. 12. et passim.



“ed for some to take pity, and there was  
 “none; and for comforters, but I found  
 “none\*.” The immediate connection of these  
 words justifies this application of them. He  
 was to be condemned both by *Jews and by hea-*  
*thens.* “The *kings of the earth* set themselves,  
 “and the *rulers* take counsel together, against the  
 “Lord, and against his anointed †.” He was to  
 pass the *forms of a trial.* “He is taken from pri-  
 “son and from *judgment*”—or as Bishop Lowth  
 more accurately and impressively renders the pas-  
 sage—“By an oppressive judgment, he was cut  
 “off ‡”—He was to die by *the cross*: and to un-  
 dergo the usual *scourging* previously inflicted  
 upon criminals. “By his *stripes* we are heal-  
 “ed”—“They *pierced* my hands and my  
 “feet §.” He was not only to die, under the  
 imputation of crime, the death of a criminal,  
 but among criminals, “He was numbered with  
 “the transgressors”—“He made his grave with  
 “the wicked ||.” The *scorn* that should be  
 poured upon him, nay, the very *language* in  
 which the spectators should reproach him, was  
 foretold. “All they that see me laugh me to  
 “scorn; they shoot out the lip, they shake the  
 “head, saying, He trusted in the Lord that he

\* Ps. lxix. 20.

† Ps. ii. 2.

‡ Lowth's Is. iii. loc.

§ Is. liii. 5. Ps. xxii. 16.

|| Is. liii. 12. 9.



“ would deliver him : let him deliver him seeing  
 “ he delighted in him\*.” His *raiment was to  
 be divided*, and the possession of a part of it  
 to be determined by *lot*. “ They part my gar-  
 “ ments among them, and cast lots upon my  
 “ vesture †.” The very ingredients that should  
 be presented to him to allay the agony of *thirst*,  
 were not forgotten. “ They gave me also gall  
 “ for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me  
 “ vinegar to drink ‡.” The language he should  
*himself* employ in the agonies of death—“ My  
 “ God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me §?”  
 The *sepulchre* which he should find among the  
 rich : so unlikely on the part of him who was  
 to suffer as a malefactor. “ He made his grave  
 “ with the wicked, and with the rich in his  
 “ death ||.” What discordancy between the one  
 and the other ! Yet both are united by the  
 prophet ; and both were accomplished in the  
 event. He died as a criminal, died among  
 thieves ; yet found a disciple in Joseph, a rich  
 man of “ Arimathea,” and a grave in “ his new  
 “ tomb, wherein never man had before been  
 “ laid.”

4. The miracles attending his sufferings were,

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\* Ps. xxii. 7, 8.

† Ps. xxii. 18.

‡ Ps. lxix. 21. See the note at the end.

§ Ps. xxii. 1.

|| Is. iii. 9.



I cannot but think, anticipated by the prophet Joel. "I will shew wonders in the heavens, and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord shall come." It is granted that the connection of these words relate to some extraordinary effusions of the Holy Spirit, which also Peter applied to the transactions on the day of Pentecost: but these were the signs to precede this out-pouring of the Spirit of God; and if the prophecy was fulfilled in reference to the giving of the Holy Spirit on that occasion, the *result* of the Saviour's sufferings, I think these signs, which were to precede that event, received their accomplishment in the miracles (so exactly corresponding with this description) which accompanied the Lord's death.

5. The design of the Messiah's sufferings were never lost sight of, for a moment, by the prophets. If we inquire of Daniel why he was to be "cut off"—the answer is already given, "to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness." In exact correspondence with these representations is the testimony of Isaiah, on the same point. "He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows."—"He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our



“ iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was  
“ upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.”  
“ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have  
“ turned every one to his own way, and  
“ the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity  
“ of us all.” Under the impulse of the same  
Spirit, Caiaphas said, when the council were  
plotting against the Redeemer, “ Ye know no-  
“ thing at all, nor consider that it is expedient  
“ for us, that one man should die for the peo-  
“ ple, and that the whole nation perish not.  
“ And this spake he not of himself; but being  
“ high-priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus  
“ should die for that nation; and not for that  
“ nation only, but that he should gather toge-  
“ ther in one, the children of God that were  
“ scattered abroad.” I know not what I can  
add to predictions so explicit, and to a com-  
mentary so satisfactory, furnished by the evan-  
gelist himself. Yes—I rejoice to recognize in  
these passages the doctrine of the atonement,  
because I feel the need of pardon. I rejoice to  
meet with one who can bear sin, and will bear  
it away, because I am myself unable to carry  
the present load which it imposes, and to meet  
the future misery which it superinduces.—When  
we read “ he hath borne our griefs and carried  
“ our sorrows”—“ the Lord hath laid upon him  
“ the iniquity of us all”—we are at once sensi-



ble that something very important is intended under language highly figurative. It is natural to look back to the times of the prophet, to the customs of the day, and especially, as the allusion is to a subject altogether spiritual, to the religious institutions with which he was acquainted, for the origin of his symbol, and for the elucidation of his expressions. Far we shall not have proceeded, in that dispensation under which he lived, before we meet with the high-priest laying his hand upon the scape-goat, and with it the sins of the congregation, to be borne away by this victim, into the wilderness; and thus the curse was averted from their heads to whom it belonged. Here we find the meaning of the passage: the allusion is most impressive; and conviction, at once of the beauty and propriety of the language, and of the important doctrine couched under the figure employed, darts across the mind like a flash of lightning. O Friend of friendless sinners! be to me what the scape-goat was to Israel; and remove from me the burden of iniquity too heavy to be endured!

Such are the predictions respecting the sufferings of the Messiah; it is time to pass on to those which relate,



## II. TO HIS EXALTATION.

The prophecies which respect this event, and its gradual stages, may be arranged under these particulars: his Resurrection, his Glorification, his Intercession, and his Universal Empire.

1. His Resurrection. At present we have nothing to do with proving the truth of history; this belongs to another department, and to one which we have already, at least partially, occupied. We have to discover what are the representations of prophecy respecting the Messiah; and we compare these with facts generally, nay universally, received as authentic: and so far as they correspond, we deem the arguments, in favour of revelation, deducible from prophecy, forcible and conclusive. It had been said, in the name of Christ, by his great progenitor, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell," or in the state of separate spirits, "neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption."—We assume that he "being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit upon his throne: he seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left



“ in” a separate state, “ neither did his flesh see  
“ corruption.” For, as the apostle Peter justly  
argued, there could be but two objects of refer-  
ence in this language of David—either to him-  
self, or to the Messiah. If it referred to himself,  
it was never accomplished, for his flesh did see  
corruption—he was “ both dead and buried,  
“ and his sepulchre is with his brethren to this  
“ day.” The conclusion was perfectly reason-  
able that it referred to the Messiah, and the  
more so that in respect of him it was accom-  
plished in their sight, for he added, “ This Je-  
“ sus hath God raised up, whereof we all are  
“ witnesses.”

2. His Glorification. The triumph of his  
ascension was anticipated, and the distinct ob-  
jects of it stated. “ He hath ascended up on  
“ high, he hath led his captivity captive, he hath  
“ received gifts for men, for the rebellious also,  
“ that the Lord God might dwell among them.”  
“ Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift  
“ up, ye everlasting doors, and the king of  
“ glory shall come in.” “ The Lord said unto  
“ my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, until I  
“ make thine enemies thy footstool.” Such  
were to be the victories, and such the exaltation  
of the Messiah. Some have denied that Jesus  
ever assumed such a high character, or answer-  
ed so elevated a description. But if this be ad-



mitted, then have words no meaning, nor is language a safe vehicle of communication between man and man. He says, "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again I leave the world and go to the Father." What can these words imply, but that he came originally from the state to which he was then returning; and that he was about to resume his native and eternal dignity? In the same manner he prays, "Father, glorify thou me, with thine ownself, with the glory which I *had* with thee, *before the world was.*" We do not wish to put forced and unnatural constructions upon language: but to ascertain and to abide by the plain and simple meaning of scripture, which is usually expressed in terms the most obvious and intelligible.

3. His Intercession. Isaiah says, not merely that "he bare the sin of many," but that "he made intercession for the transgressors." And the apostles says, "He ever liveth to make intercession for us." The scheme of salvation is a plan which has manifestly been pursued through all successions of time. And the design is still carrying on. When Jesus pronounced "It is finished"—he proclaimed the completion of his expiation for sin, and of his triumphs over our adversaries: but he is still engaged in the great plan of human redemption; and every



day, while he intercedes, is adding new accessions to his empire. Hence another particular in prophecy is,

4. His universal dominion. He is to have the “heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession.” In this, as in most other cases, the predictions of Daniel are singularly explicit. Nebuchadnezzar saw an image of immense dimensions and of terrible majesty, composed of heterogeneous materials, which the prophet explained to typify a succession of inferior kingdoms arising out of that of which Nebuchadnezzar was the head. He saw also a stone cut out without hands smite the image, and all its parts were broken in pieces, dispersed, consumed—while the stone “became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.” Thus he interprets it of the empire of the Messiah. “In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.”

These are, I believe, the leading predictions to be found in the Scriptures respecting the sufferings and the exaltation of the Messiah. Upon the whole we repeat that it is such a character



as imagination could never have delineated, nor even conceived. Isaiah, accordingly, when he connects the description of a “visage marred” more than any man, and his form more than “the sons of men,” with a future glory and dignity, which shall “shut the mouths of kings”—adds “many were astonished at thee!”—The astonishment then excited, still continues, and alters its character in respect of different persons, as it arises from different sources.

Angels were astonished. Their amazement arose from their knowledge of his majesty. They, who had been accustomed to see his throne higher than the morning-stars, and to worship at his feet, were overwhelmed with astonishment to see him assume the form of a servant; and to witness the indignities to which he voluntarily subjected himself—indignities received from his creatures. The potsherds of the earth did not, in this instance, strive with each other, but with their Maker; and man crucified him whom angels adored. With what interest, and with what increasing wonder, must they have seen, when they attended as his servants, divine submission amidst human ingratitude, rising more eminently into notice every step of his journey, till Gethsemane and Calvary crowned his humiliation!



Demons were astonished. Jesus beheld Satan falling as lightning from heaven. And with what amazement, as well as indignation, must the powers of darkness have seen the ruin of their empire, the renown and stability of which they had augured from the depth of his weakness? and this, in the hour when they most of all anticipated success! Their stratagems prevailed, and Jesus died: but at that moment the trumpet of victory, on the part of the Saviour, resounded through the caverns of mortality, and the throne of death trembled under him, as a signal of it's final destruction.

Men were astonished. The Jews were terrified at their own work. The darkness of the heavens surprised them in the midst of their railings, and closed the mouth of blasphemy for a season. The attention of the malefactor, expiring by his side, was arrested. His amazement rose into reverence; his reverence into faith; and he said, "Lord, remember me, when thou comest into thy kingdom." The soldier, enured to scenes of blood, shrunk from this spectacle of mingled majesty and horror; and the Centurion said, "Truly this man was the Son of God." The mixed multitude were moved. Those, whose vain curiosity, and unfeeling hearts, had drawn them together to that sight,



“ beholding the things that were done, smote  
“ their breasts, and returned.”

The World are still astonished. The tale spread. It formed the subject of conversation, and gained daily and hourly progress. It is still agitated; and still excites admiration. Those who feel no interest beyond this, can neither gainsay nor resist the evidences which support this marvellous event, and which confound them. Some believe to the saving of the soul. Some behold and despise, wonder and perish.

Christians and converts are astonished. Their's is the amazement of gratitude and love. They gaze with holy wonder on the visage which was so marred, and marred for them. Every line of agony which they trace upon that meek, and resigned, and bruised countenance; deformed by blows, defiled by injury, and foul with weeping; was destined to be ploughed upon their hearts; had he not interposed his person for their's, and sustained the penalties which they had incurred. O blessed Saviour, many were astonished at thee; and the emotions communicated from the fathers to their children, through so many successive ages, have not yet subsided!

But astonishment breaks into exultation, when we see him springing from his lowest degradation to the possession of his ancient dignity; and, anticipating his eternal empire, we



join the inspired psalmist, in saying, "Thou,  
 " Lord, in the beginning hast laid the founda-  
 " tion of the earth, and the heavens are the  
 " work of thy hands: They shall perish but  
 " thou remainest: yea, all of them shall wax  
 " old like a garment; and as a vesture shalt  
 " thou fold them up, and they shall be chang-  
 " ed: But thou art the same, and thy years shall  
 " have no end."



## NOTES.

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### NOTE TO THE TWELFTH LECTURE.

THE Writers of the Ancient Universal History have these criticisms upon the mixture presented to our Lord upon the Cross.

“ This mixture was probably given to intoxicate the sufferers, that  
 “ they might be less sensible of their torment ; and Jesus might re-  
 “ fuse it upon that very account, because it became him, who was  
 “ then going to offer himself a free and voluntary sacrifice to God  
 “ for the sins of men, and was to shew them a pattern how to bear  
 “ afflictions with due resignation to the divine will, to avoid a thing  
 “ which might too far discompose his thoughts, and shew too ill a  
 “ precedent to his followers.

“ One of the Evangelists makes this mixture to consist of myrrh  
 “ and wine ; and another, of vinegar and gall. Hence some sup-  
 “ pose, that though the former was usually given on such occasions,  
 “ yet the soldiers, out of spite and contempt, gave him the latter,  
 “ which would have a contrary effect. But we much doubt whether  
 “ the Romans, naturally delighting in being cruel to persons in  
 “ misery, could be capable of so much compassion towards criminals.  
 “ Their barbarous sports and spectacles argue rather the reverse.  
 “ Besides the *vinum myrrhatum*, we are told (*Plin. l. xiv. c. 13.*) was  
 “ highly esteemed by them, insomuch that one of the laws of the  
 “ twelve tables forbade their dead to be washed or sprinkled with it.  
 “ And who can imagine, that they would bestow it on such crimi-  
 “ nals, as they condemned to this kind of death, which was held in  
 “ the greatest ignominy and reproach among them?



“ It is more likely, that the evangelist, who wrote in the *Hebrew*  
“ or *Syriac*, made use of the word, מר, *mar*, which signifies bitter-  
“ ness, or any bitter ingredient, and that his translator mistook it for  
“ מור, *mor*, *myrrh*; and thus the two evangelists will be reconciled,  
“ and the prophecy fulfilled, *They gave me gall to eat, and, in my*  
“ *thirst, vinegar to drink.* (Ps. lxix. 21.) For the whole tenour of  
“ this Psalm seems to be a continued prophecy of Christ’s sufferings,  
“ as well as of that judicial blindness, ruin, and dispersion, which  
“ fell on the impenitent Jews.”

*Anc. Univ. Hist. Vol. X. B. ii. chap. 11. Note Z. p. 601.*

*London edit. 1747.*



## LECTURE XIII.

THE PROPHECY OF JESUS CHRIST RESPECTING  
THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

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 LUKE xix. 41—44.

*And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least, in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.*

**I**S this the language of an impostor? Are these the emotions of a deceiver? Will this tender and disinterested deportment, these hu-



mane and compassionate feelings, these warm and natural appeals to the heart and to the conscience, accord with the pretensions of the hypocrite, and with the concealed cruelty of a determined assassin of human repose? For the character of Jesus, if it were only assumed, was a desperate and barbarous assault upon the peace and security of society: because, at such a period, and with the expectations awakened throughout the world, it could not fail to produce a general and a powerful effect. There is no alternative: you must either admit his claims, supported as they are by the uniform consistency, and by the unparalleled purity of his conduct; or you must rank him among those deceivers, who availed themselves of the prevailing prejudices of the people to raise themselves to distinction; and thus consider his whole life as one continued succession of specious operations covering the darkest principles. It will require a monstrous faith to believe, and a bold tongue to avow, such an injurious conclusion, relative to such a character as that of Jesus Christ, so elucidated and supported by the consistency of a most holy life. To imagine him a good, an amiable, and a benevolent man, and to associate these qualities with assumed and false pretensions, is an incongruity which must be left to the mind of a Sceptic to comprehend and



to receive; but which can never be reconciled to any acknowledged principles of sound and impartial reasoning. To escape so absurd a conclusion, we must regard the conduct this evening detailed, as the natural result of the most tender, the most compassionate feelings. The text is the voice of insulted friendship, the complaint of abused goodness, the accent of divine pity. It is the language of a Physician, watching the progress of a disease which must be mortal, because the patient obstinately rejects prescriptions which alone could be effectual; and refuses the proffered interposition of his assistance and ability. It is the language of a Shepherd, seeking his wandering flock, when he sees them ready to perish, and they refuse to hear his voice, and to follow him. It is the language of a Father, in the midst of a rebellious family, when his children choose the road to death, and spurn his wise and gracious counsels. It is the language of a Saviour, stretching out his hands in vain to a guilty world: shedding neglected tears upon inveterate enemies; and addressing himself all the day long to a gain-saying and crooked generation, who disregard him.

In the dispensations of God, we find mercy mingling with judgment, goodness with severity, light with darkness.—Sometimes, the divine pre-



sence beams forth, irradiated by love, and divested of every frown of terror, of every threatening, formidable feature. It is the voice of a parent that speaks to us; and his lips drop encouragement. We lose our apprehensions in a sense of his kindness; and hasten to his feet to receive his smiles. This night the fire of divine indignation breaks forth to consume the guilty. We listen with dismay as the thunder rolls, and shudder as the storm passes by, lest an arrow flaming with vengeance should be lodged in our own bosoms—because we also have grievously offended. We walk over the graves of transgressors with a trembling foot, because our hearts beat conscious of ingratitude and rebellion. Our God is a consuming fire. Does he therefore change? Is he the author of confusion? It is impossible! We ourselves create the darkness which we fear; and he restores the peace which we had forfeited. His object is one and undivided: from the line of his own great scheme he never deviates; and it comprehends human interests as well as his own. To maintain his own honour, to support his own dignity, and to promote his own glory, enters deeply into all his just designs; and, (O matchless condescension!) he blends these noble purposes with the security of human happiness.

He never loses sight of this united object,



whether he encourage the fearful, or punish the guilty; whether he clothe himself in love or in terror; whether he stay, in compassion, the calamities which distract nations; or, in righteous indignation, shake them with the thunder of his power. There is an awful mixture of mercy and of justice in the scene exhibited at this moment. Jesus weeps over the city, the impending ruin of which he denounced with all the authority of a judge. He had tears for human sufferings; but he had also punishments for human guilt. The destruction of Jerusalem will decidedly prove, that if God deigns to visit man with his favours, he no less resolves to visit, even in his own people, their transgressions with a rod, and their iniquities with stripes. Well might Josephus say, (for to him, I apprehend, belong the words, which, according to the custom of ancient historians, he puts into the mouth of Eleazar)—“Where is now  
 “that glorious city, the metropolis of the Jewish  
 “nation, surrounded by impregnable walls,  
 “guarded by so many towers, and strong holds,  
 “yet scarcely sufficient to contain it’s hostile  
 “preparations, and so many myriads of men as  
 “were fighting to defend it—what is now be-  
 “come of that city, in which God himself was  
 “thought to reside? It is overturned from it’s  
 “very foundations; and no memorial of it is



“ left, except the ruins of *their* camp by whom  
 “ it was subverted still scattered among it’s ves-  
 “ tiges.” “ Where is the Jew who can con-  
 “ template these scenes, and desire longer the  
 “ light of the sun, could he even live undis-  
 “ turbed? Who is such an enemy to his coun-  
 “ try—where is the timid wretch, that does not  
 “ think himself to have lived too long? Would  
 “ to God death had sealed our eyes ere they had  
 “ beheld that sacred city fired by hostile hands  
 “ —and that holy temple with such impiety  
 “ laid waste! But since it is now all over—  
 “ since every hope has vanished, every noble  
 “ hope which nourished us, that perhaps at  
 “ least we might revenge these things upon our  
 “ enemies—since we alone are left to this hard  
 “ condition—it remains only that we nobly  
 “ die!”—If we revolt from the purpose which  
 this address recommended, we cannot but be  
 moved at the misery which it deplores. A  
 more awful lesson to nations cannot be ima-  
 gined; and a more affecting commentary upon  
 our Lord’s prediction, relative to this event, can-  
 not be produced. “ And when he was come  
 “ near, he beheld the city, and wept over it,  
 “ saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at  
 “ least, in this thy day, the things which belong

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\* See Note 1, at the end of the Lecture.



“ unto thy peace ! but now they are hid from  
 “ thine eyes. For the days shall come upon  
 “ thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench  
 “ about thee, and compass thee round, and keep  
 “ thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even  
 “ with the ground, and thy children within  
 “ thee ; and they shall not leave in thee one  
 “ stone upon another ; because thou knewest  
 “ not the time of thy visitation.”

That Jerusalem was to sustain a regular siege ;  
 that it's inhabitants were to be exposed to the  
 most terrible calamities, and the most certain  
 ruin ; and that the city was not to be partially  
 wasted, but totally destroyed ; may be gathered  
 from this single passage. But the event was of  
 such importance, that it was repeatedly intro-  
 duced by our Lord, in both his public and his  
 private discourses ; and on one memorable occa-  
 sion, as he was seated with his disciples upon the  
 Mount of Olives, an elevation which commanded  
 a full view of the city and of the temple, he entered  
 into a detail of a variety of interesting and mi-  
 nute particulars, respecting this dreadful revolu-  
 tion. Three, out of four of the Evangelists, re-  
 corded his words, with very little difference as  
 to language, and still less as to facts. It is  
 worthy your remark, that John, the only one of  
 them who did *not* record the prophecies of his  
 master on this point, survived the desolation :



the rest, according to the most accurate calculations, died before Jerusalem was besieged by the Romans. It cannot, therefore, be pretended, that the passages, to which I am about to refer you, were forgeries subsequent to the event itself: since those, who may question whether the Evangelists were all dead, John excepted, before that time, cannot deny that the gospels were all published to the world before these fearful scenes were acted. From the united narratives of these writers, we shall gather the amount of our Lord's predictions; and from the testimony of Josephus, an unexceptionable source of information, on account of his being an esteemed historian, and eye-witness of these transactions, as well as confirmed in the principal facts by the best Roman writers of the day, I shall collect the circumstances of the siege, which furnished a full accomplishment of the prophecy of Jesus Christ. From this plan, it will appear,

First, That the SIGNS which were to precede this event were distinctly marked;

Secondly, The CIRCUMSTANCES of the siege itself were expressly foretold;

Thirdly, The TIME for the accomplishment of these things was absolutely fixed;

Fourthly, It was predetermined and predicted, that this destruction should be TOTAL and FINAL.



First, The signs which were to precede this event were distinctly marked. Now these were singularly important, and repeatedly pressed upon the disciples, because some of them were to witness these very calamities, and it was necessary that they should be apprized of the signals of their approach, that they might escape the sudden destruction. It is not to be supposed that they would easily let them slip from their memories; and our Lord professes to furnish them with indications so sure, that they might, by them, as certainly know the coming on of this awful period, as they might learn, by the budding of vegetation, the advances of the spring. “Behold the fig-tree and all the trees: “When they now shoot forth, ye see and know “of your ownelves, that summer is now nigh “at hand: So likewise ye, when ye see these “things come to pass, know ye, that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand;”—for this fatal era to the Jewish nation, stood closely connected with the increasing spread of the gospel among the Gentiles.

1. FALSE PROPHETS were to arise before this dreadful visitation, and were to continue to deceive the people to it's very consummation. To wave the testimony of Gamaliel, given before the council, and recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, relative to two impostors “in those days,”



and with which every one in this assembly is acquainted; it may be more interesting to produce some instances with which you may be less conversant. "Take heed," said the Saviour, "that ye be not deceived; for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them." "False Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect. But take ye heed; behold I have foretold you all things." "Wherefore if they shall say, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not." And Josephus testifies, that previous to the wars of Judea, the Jews were divided and distracted between thieves and incanters. The one impoverished, the other deluded them; and during the administration of Felix they multiplied beyond measure. "The city," said he, "was thronged with magicians and impostors, who prevailed upon the multitude to *follow them into the desert*, promising to shew them signs and miracles performed by the power of God. Many were seduced; and suffered for their credulity: for they were recalled by Felix and punished." He proceeds to produce an example among others: and says, "At that time a certain man



“ came from Egypt to Jerusalem, calling him-  
 “ self a prophet, who stirred up the people to  
 “ follow him to the Mount called Olivet, situ-  
 “ ated about five furlongs from Jerusalem, by  
 “ assuring them that from that spot they should  
 “ see the walls of the city fall to the ground,  
 “ through which breach he would give them  
 “ entrance into it. But Felix, having received  
 “ intelligence of this circumstance, armed his  
 “ soldiers, and marching out of Jerusalem a  
 “ large company both of horse and foot, assault-  
 “ ed and slew four hundred of them; two hun-  
 “ dred he secured; and for the Egyptian—he  
 “ fled, and was heard of no more.” The same  
 infatuation prevailed during the siege of the  
 city. Every attempt to open the eyes of the  
 people proved altogether nugatory. And this  
 strong delusion hastened and sealed their utter  
 ruin. When one of the porches of the temple  
 was fired by the Romans, there perished six  
 thousand people, men, women, and children;  
 and Josephus adds—“ A false prophet occasion-  
 “ ed the death of all this multitude: who had  
 “ preached that day in the city, and command-  
 “ ed them to go into the temple, and there re-  
 “ ceive tokens of deliverance\*.”

2. Great CONVULSIONS were to precede this aw-

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\* See Note 2, at the end.



ful and extraordinary event. These were foretold partly in figurative, and partly in explicit, language. The darkening of the sun, and of the moon; the falling of the stars, and the shaking of the powers of heaven, are all strong, metaphorical expressions, signifying the struggles of ambition, the convulsions of kingdoms, and the eclipses of the glory of princes; for ‘these are stars indeed, and sometimes falling ones!’—But lest the figure, sublime as it is, should be misunderstood, he expressly says, “Ye shall hear of wars and  
 “rumours of wars—nation shall rise against  
 “nation, and kingdom against kingdom.” Just before the destruction of Jerusalem, the mighty empire of Rome was rent with internal divisions; and her princes occupied but a precarious throne. The imperial diadem was scarcely fixed by intrigue, before it was dislodged by violence. At the same period there were riots at Jerusalem—and the spirit of anarchy swept over all the surrounding nations. Besides these political commotions, nature was to share the general distraction, and to increase the general calamity. “And great earthquakes  
 “shall be in divers places, and famines, and  
 “pestilences;” these fearful ministers of divine displeasure punctually fulfilled the words of the Saviour. Rome felt through all the members of her vast body the effects of famine in the days



of Claudius; and the distress was general throughout Judea. The Apostle Paul zealously promoted the contributions of one class of Christians for the relief of another. Rome suffered the shock of an earthquake: and these convulsions were no less general than the famine. And in the same way, to the same extent, the whole was accomplished. Nor were the disciples exempted from calamities which affected all nations: for besides the share which they were compelled to sustain in these things, it had been expressly foretold that they should be dispersed and wasted by the most cruel persecutions. “They shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my names’ sake. And some of you shall they cause to be put to death.” The well-known general persecutions of the primitive churches—the personal sufferings and sacrifices of the apostles; the support which they received from him who promised them “a mouth and wisdom, which all their adversaries should not be able to gainsay or to resist; render it absolutely unnecessary to say one word on the fidelity of the prophecy on this point.

3. There were to be “**FEARFUL SIGHTS AND SIGNS** from heaven.” Josephus enumerates at



large a number of prodigies which happened at this time. “On the day of Pentecost the priests on entering the temple at night, felt the whole place tremble—and heard a voice saying—“Let us depart hence.”—He also relates, that the son of a common villager, four years before the breaking out of the war, continually lamented the approaching destruction of the city. He was neither to be silenced nor moved by the stripes inflicted by his countrymen, nor the more cruel torments which he suffered when delivered over by them to the Romans. His cry was still “Woe, Woe, to Jerusalem!”—During seven years and five months, with unaltered voice, and unwearied step, he paced the devoted city, denouncing it’s ruin; and after seeing the beginning of those evils which he foretold, as he was upon the walls of Jerusalem, a stone from one of the Roman engines smote him—and thus he died\*. The same historian records some signs in the air before sunset. But the objection to all this is, that the Jewish historian was credulous: if this supposition be advanced to invalidate his testimony, I must remark that Tacitus, the famed Roman historian was equally so: for he relates, without any sort of collusion with

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\* See Note 3, at the end.



Josephus—some of those signs which the Jew records. And if the historians were both deceived: so were the people—the people of both nations—for these things were most surely believed among them, and were perhaps never questioned till in these last days scoffers have arisen. Among the signs of Jerusalem's approaching destruction was,

4. A GENERAL DIFFUSION of the GOSPEL. The acts of the apostles will discover them (even those of them whose Jewish prejudices for a season struggled with their enlarged commission) dispersing themselves through different parts of the Gentile world; and Christianity was disseminated, where their personal presence was withdrawn, by means of the vast variety of their interesting epistles, and the local labours of men whose faith they knew, and whom they appointed with themselves for the work of the ministry. These very writings, in their style and manner of address, mark considerable progress made by different churches in the knowledge of Christ; and speak of the increasing power of the gospel in other parts. In the days of Nero, it appears from the testimony of Tacitus, the professors of Christianity were very numerous. And while this was it's state before Jerusalem was laid in ruins, this very awful event gave it a new impulse, a new direction,



a new triumph. Conviction enlightened the minds of many, while these things were yet in their own remembrance; and they could compare the predictions so full and explicit, with the vivid recollections which they themselves had of those dreadful scenes to which they related.

Secondly: The CIRCUMSTANCES of the siege itself were no less expressly foretold.

1. The planting of the ROMAN STANDARD before the holy city: for the very ground round about it was considered holy. “When ye shall see the abomination of desolation stand in the holy place.”—The eagles of Rome were assigned, in her senseless mythology, a place among her deities; and that which was worshipped as an idol, deserved the name of an abomination, and would justly be so deemed by the Jews, who had learned, (although the precept was too often forgotten) “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God; and him only shalt thou serve.” But as death and war, bloodshed and calamity, rioted wherever the imperial standard was planted, it was well denominated “the abomination of desolation.” These circumstances also decided that Jerusalem was to fall by the hand of Rome.



2. Some were to ESCAPE the flood of rain.  
 “ When ye shall see Jerusalem encompassed  
 “ with armies, then know that the desolation  
 “ thereof is nigh.” The Romans not only entrenched round the city, but intirely encircled it with a wall; a project which was executed beyond the expectation of those who attempted it. In three days they erected a wall of thirty-nine furlongs\*; and crowned it with thirteen towers.  
 “ Then let them which are in Judea flee to the  
 “ mountains, and let them which are in the  
 “ midst of it depart out; and let not them that  
 “ are in the countries enter thereinto: For these  
 “ be the days of vengeance, that all things  
 “ which are written may be fulfilled.” But how could they escape at such a time? He, who gave the command, provided the means. The Roman chief who first assailed the city, did it at a moment when the Jews were not prepared for a siege, and according to human calculation he might have succeeded: but he abandoned it unexpectedly; and in so doing gave opportunity to many considerable Jews to escape; among whom the Christians left the devoted spot; and it has been asserted, that none of them perished in the siege of Jerusalem.

3. The CALAMITIES of those who REMAINED

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\* Five Miles.



are expressed in very forcible terms; but all language must fall short of the facts. Our Lord affirms—"There shall be great tribulation, such  
 " as was not since the beginning of the world  
 " to this time, no, nor ever shall be." Josephus declares that he knows not how to record the scenes which he witnessed, and that all the evils that ever befel any other nation, were small in comparison with those which then alighted upon his unhappy countrymen. We have already, on another occasion, related that a mother devoured her own child, through the extremity of the famine. It was when he heard of this dreadful act, that Titus swore the entire extirpation of the people, and the utter ruin of the city. I cannot, out of respect to your feelings, as well as my own, enter into the detail: let those who doubt, read the wars of the Jews by Josephus, and he will find a succession of chapters on the dreadful evils which the wretched Jews sustained during this unparalleled siege. Such was the excess of mortality, that unable to bury their dead, they were compelled to precipitate the bodies over their walls into the neighbouring vallies.

Thirdly, The TIME for the accomplishment of these things was absolutely fixed—"This generation shall not pass, till all be fulfilled."



Now the very first thing that strikes us here is the apparent improbability of such an event at such a moment. The Jews were then in league with the Romans. "We have no king but " Cesar," was their cry. The very reason assigned by the council, for wishing to destroy Jesus, was a fear of provoking their conquering allies to jealousy, by the noise of his wonderful works. Yet it is equally true, that Josephus, who died within ninety years after Christ, was actively engaged in these very wars, and lived to publish a history of them.

Fourthly, it was predetermined and predicted, that this destruction should be TOTAL and FINAL.

When Titus solemnly declared he would utterly waste the city, he designed to save the temple. But Jesus had said, that "one stone " should not be left upon another." The voice of prophecy was stronger than the voice of the General. In vain he had given a strict charge to guard it from injury—a soldier, "moved," said Josephus, "by a divine impulse," rising on the shoulders of his fellow, cast a brand into the sanctuary. Titus rushed to the spot to animate his men to extinguish the flames: but he threatened, entreated, nay even punished in vain: the fury of the soldiers was not to be controuled—they increased the burning—Alas! all was con-



sumed. Thus perished a temple, which is said to have been built of marble so white, that it appeared a mountain of snow: to have been so ornamented with gold, even on the outside, as almost to render it painful to look at it when the sun shone; and formed of stones cemented, of an incredible magnitude. Then began a tremendous slaughter, in which neither sex nor age found mercy. The city was surrounded by innumerable crosses. And so intirely was it afterwards razed from it's foundations, that a ploughshare passed over it's whole extent and compass.

The apostate Julian, with the express design to falsify the predictions of Christ, attempted to rebuild it. You shall receive an account of this transaction from an adversary to Christianity. In the decline and fall of the Roman empire it is said "Gregory Nazienzen published his account of the miracle" (by which the scheme was defeated) before the expiration of the same "year, 363. He boldly asserted, that this "preter-natural event was not disputed by the "infidels; and this assertion, strange as it may "seem, is confirmed by the unexceptionable "testimony of Ammianus Marcellinus. This "philosophic soldier, who loved the virtues, "without adopting the prejudices of his master, "has recorded in his judicious and candid his-



“ tory of his Own Times, the extraordinary ob-  
 “ stacles which interrupted the restoration of the  
 “ temple of Jerusalem. Whilst Alypius, assisted  
 “ by the Governors of the province, urged with  
 “ vigour and diligence the execution of the work,  
 “ horrible balls of fire breaking out near the  
 “ foundations with frequent and reiterated at-  
 “ tacks, rendered the place from time to time  
 “ inaccessible to the scorched and blasted work-  
 “ men, and the victorious elements continuing  
 “ in this manner obstinately and resolutely bent,  
 “ as it were, to drive them to a distance, the  
 “ undertaking was abandoned.” Gibbon adds  
 —“ Such an authority *should* satisfy a believing,  
 “ and *must* astonish an incredulous mind. *Yet* a  
 “ philosopher may still require the original evi-  
 “ dence of impartial and intelligent spectators.”  
 — Yes, he *may*—and a man *may* deny the plain-  
 est matter of fact that can be presented to the  
 senses. Mark the ungenerous insinuation; and  
 it’s disagreement with all that he was before  
 compelled to concede. He recited the testi-  
 mony of a heathen, a scholar, a friend to the  
 undertaking, who confesses that it was abandon-  
 ed, because fire consumed the workmen: he ac-  
 knowledges that the historian was a “ philoso-  
 “ phic soldier; that his history respected that,  
 “ of which he was an eye-witness: that it is  
 “ candid and judicious—that his testimony is



“unexceptionable.”—*Yet* a philosopher may require still further evidence.—We have no further evidence to produce, and we despair of communicating conviction to minds which can reject this. Yet time has added one more support to the fact.—The city has never been built on the same spot to this hour. With whatever feelings a philosophic sceptic may regard Jerusalem sitting in the dust, a Christian while he contemplates her ashes will remember, that all this widowhood and calamity has overtaken her, because “she knew not the day of her visitation.”



## NOTES.

## NOTES TO THE THIRTEENTH LECTURE.

## NOTE 1.

PART of the oration of Eleazar, referred to, and translated in the opening of the preceding Lecture. Πῦ δ' ἡ μεγάλη πόλις ἡ τῷ παντὸς Ἰουδαίων γένους μητρόπολις, ἡ τοσέτοις μὲν ἐρυμνῇ τειχῶν περιβόλοις, τοσαῦτα δ' αὐτῆς φρέγια καὶ μεγέθη πύργων προβεβλημένη, μόλις δὲ χωρῆσα τὰς εἰς τὸν πόλεμον παρασκευάς, τοσαύτας δὲ μυριάδας ἀνδρῶν ἔχουσα τῶν ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς μαχομένων; πῦ γέγονεν ἡμῖν ἡ τὸν Θεὸν ἔχειν οἰκιστὴν πεπιγευμένη; πρόρριζος ἐκ βάθρων ἀνήρπασαι, καὶ μόνον αὐτῆς μνημεῖον ὑπολέλειπται, τὸ τῶν ἀνηρηκότων αὐτὴν στρατόπεδον, ἔτι τοῖς λειψάνοις ἐποικῆν. πρεσβύται δὲ δύστηνοι τῇ σποδῷ τῷ τεμένει παρακάθονται, καὶ γυναῖκες ὀλίγαι πρὸς ὕβριν αἰσχίστην ὑπὸ τῶν πολεμίων τεττηρημέναι. ταῦτα τίς ἐν νῷ βαλλόμενος ἡμῶν καρτερήσει τὸν ἥλιον ὄραν, καὶ δυνήσεται ζῆν ἀκινδύνως; τίς ἔτι τῆς πατρίδος ἐχθρὸς, ἢ τίς ἔτις ἀνάνδρος καὶ φιλόψυχος, ὥς μὴ καὶ περὶ τῷ μέχρι νυκτὸς ζῆσαι μετανοῇ; ἀλλ' εἶδε πάντες ετεθνήκειμεν, πρὶν τὴν ἱερὰν ἐκείνην πόλιν χερσὶν ἰδεῖν κατὰσκαπτομένην πολεμίων, πρὶν τὸν ναὸν τὸν ἅγιον ἔτις ἀνοσίως ἐξορωρυγμένον. ἐπεὶ δὲ ἡμᾶς ἐκ ἀγεννῆς ἐλπίς ἐβασκόλησεν ὥς τάχα πῦ δυνήσεσθαι πολεμίους ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς ἀμυνέσθαι, φρέδη δὲ γέγονε νῦν, καὶ μόνους ἡμᾶς ἐπὶ τῆς ἀνάγκης κατὰλέλοιπε, σπένσωμεν καλῶς ἀποθανεῖν.

*Jos. de bel. Jud. Lib. vii. p. 1322. Tom. ii. Huds. edit. Fol.*



NOTE 2.—The following extracts will confirm what has been advanced in the Lecture respecting the deceptions practised upon the multitude by deceivers, as foretold by our Lord. Of Magicians and false prophets, Josephus says—*Συνέστη δὲ πρὸς τέτοις σῖφος ἕτερον πονηρῶν, χειρὶ μὲν καθαρώτερον, ταις γνώμαις δὲ ἀσεβέστερον, ὅπερ ἔδειν ἥττον τῶν σφαγέων τὴν εὐδαιμονίαν τῆς πόλεως ἐλυμήνατο. πλάνοι γὰρ ἄνθρωποι καὶ ἀπατεῶνες, προσχήματι θειασμῶ, νεωτερισμῶς καὶ μεταβολὰς πραγματευόμενοι, δαιμονῶν τὸ πλῆθος ἀνέπειθον, καὶ προῆγον εἰς τὴν ἐρημίαν, ὡς ἐκεῖ τῷ Θεῷ δείξαντος αὐτοῖς σημεῖα ἐλευθερίας. ἐπὶ τέτοις ὁ Φῆλιξ, ἐδόκει γὰρ ἀποστάσεως εἶναι καταβολή, πέμψας ἱππεῖς καὶ πεζοὺς ὀπλίτας, πολὺ πλῆθος διέφθειρε.*

*Jos. de bello Jud. Lib. ii. Cap. xiii. Tom. ii. p. 1075, §. 4.*

*Huds. edit.*

Of the Egyptian who allured the people to the Mount of Olives, he gives the following account:—*Μείζονι δὲ ταύτης πληγῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ ἐκάκωσεν ὁ Αἰγύπλιος ψευδοπροφήτης. παραγενόμενος γὰρ εἰς τὴν χώραν, ἄνθρωπος, γόης, καὶ προφήτης πῖσιν ἐπιθεὶς εαυτῷ, περὶ τρισμυρίας μὲν ἀθροΐξει τῶν ἠπατημένων. περιγαλῶν δὲ αὐτὸς ἐκ τῆς ἐρημίας εἰς τὸ Ἐλαιῶν καλούμενον ὄρος, ἐκεῖθεν οἷός τε ἦν εἰς Ἱερουσόλυμα παρελθεῖν βιάζεσθαι, καὶ κρατήσας τῆς τε Ρωμαϊκῆς φρουρᾶς καὶ τῷ δήμῳ τυραννεῖν, χρώμενος τοῖς συνεισπεσῶσι δορυφόροις. φθάνει δὲ αὐτὸς τὴν ὁρμὴν Φῆλιξ ὑπαντιάσας μετὰ τῶν Ρωμαϊκῶν ὀπλιτῶν, καὶ πᾶς ὁ δῆμος συνεφύψατο τῆς ἀμυνῆς. ὥς τε συμβολῆς γενομένης, τὸν μὲν Αἰγύπλιον φυγεῖν μετ' ὀλίγων διαφθαῖναι δὲ καὶ ζωγρηθῆναι πλείους τῶν σὺν αὐτῷ· τὸ δὲ λοιπὸν πλῆθος σκεδασθὲν ἐπὶ τὴν ἑαυτῶν ἑκάστον διαλαθῖν.*

*Jos. de bello Jud. Lib. ii. Cap. xiii. Tom. ii. p. 1075, 1076. § 5.*

*Huds. edit.*

A false prophet occasioned the death of no less than six thousand persons at once, as related in the Lecture. *ἤκον δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν λοιπὴν σοὰν τῷ ἔξωθεν ἱερῷ. καταφεύγει δ' ἐπ' αὐτὴν ἀπὸ τῷ δήμῳ γυναῖκα καὶ παιδία, καὶ σύμμικτος ὄχλος πλείστος εἰς ἑξακισχίλιος. πρὶν Καίσαρα κρῖναι τί περὶ αὐτῶν ἢ κελεῦσαι τὰς ἡγέμονας, φερόμενοι τοῖς θυμοῖς οἱ*



στρατιῶται, τὴν σοὰν ὑφάπλισι. καὶ συνέβη τὰς μὲν, ῥιπιῶντας αὐτὰς ἐκ τῆς φλογὸς διαφθαρεῖναι, τὰς δ' ἐν αὐτῇ. περιεσώθη δ' ἐκ τούτων ἑδείς. τέτοις αἰτίαις τῆς ἀπωλείας ψευδοπροφήτης τις κατέστη, κατ' ἐκείνην κηρύξας τὴν ἡμέραν τοῖς ἐπὶ τῆς πόλεως, ὡς “ὁ Θεὸς ἐπὶ τὸ ἱερόν ἀνα-  
“βῆναι κελεύει, δεξομένους τὰ σημεῖα τῆς σωτηρίας.”

*Joseph. de bello Jud. Lib. vi. Cap. v. Tom. ii. p. 1281. § 2. Hud. Edit.*

These passages are translated, or the substance of them is given, and they are marked as quotations in the preceding Lecture.

NOTE 3.—Among the signs preceding the destruction of Jerusalem, as recorded by Josephus, I only extract those which were alluded to in the Lecture—and especially the account of the countryman whose cry and death are circumstantially related in the preceding pages.

The gate of the temple opened spontaneously. ἡ δὲ ἀνατολικὴ πύλη τῷ ἐνδοτέρῳ, χαλκὴ μὲν ἔσα καὶ σιβαρωτάτη, κλειομένη δὲ περὶ δέι μόλις ὑπ' ἀνδρῶν ἑικοσι, καὶ μοχλοῖς μὲν ἐπερειδομένη σιδηροδέτοις, καταπῆγας δ' ἔχουσα βαθυτάτης, εἰς τὸν ἑδὸν ὄντα διηνεκὺς λίθος καδιεμένους, ὥφθη κατὰ νυκτὸς ἄραν ἑκτὴν, αὐτομάτως ἠνεωγμένη.

*Jos. de bello Jud. Lib. vi. Cap. v. p. 1281. § 3. Tom. ii. Hud. edit.*

A voice was heard saying—‘Let us depart hence’—κατὰ δὲ τὴν ἑορτήν, ἡ Πεντηκοστὴ καλεῖται, νύκτωρ οἱ ἱερεῖς παρελθόντες εἰς τὸ ἑνδον ἱερόν, ὥσπερ αὐτοῖς ἔθος ἦν πρὸς τὰς λειτουργίας, πρῶτον μὲν κινήσεως ἀντιλαβέσθαι ἔφασαν καὶ κλύεσθαι, μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα καὶ φωνῆς ἀδρόας, μεταβαίνωμεν ἐν τιῦθειν.

*Jos. de bello Jud. Lib. vi. Cap. v. p. 1282, § 3. Tom. ii. Hud. edit.*

The prediction and death of the countryman. Το δὲ τέτων φοβερώτερον. Ἰησοῦς γὰρ τις υἱὸς Ανάνη τῶν ἰδιωτῶν ἀγροῖκος, πρὸ τεσσάρων ἔτων τῷ πολέμῳ, τὰ μάλιστα τῆς πόλεως εἰρηνευομένης καὶ εὐθηνάσης, ἐλθὼν εἰς τὴν ἑορτήν, ἐν ᾗ σκηνοποιεῖσθαι πάντας ἔθος τῷ Θεῷ κατὰ τὸ ἱερόν, ἐξαπίνης ἀναβοᾶν ἤρξατο, “φωνὴ ἀπ' ἀνατολῆς, φωνὴ ἀπὸ  
“δύσεως, φωνὴ ἀπὸ τῶν τεσσάρων ἀνέμων, φωνὴ ἐπὶ Ἱεροσόλυμα καὶ



“ τὸν ναὸν, φωνὴ ἐπὶ νυμφίῃς καὶ νύμφῃς, φωνὴ ἐπὶ τὸν λαὸν πάντα.”  
 τὸτο, μεθ’ ἡμέραν καὶ νύκτωρ, κατὰ πάντας τὰς γενώπας περιήει  
 κεκραγώς, τῶν δ’ ἐπισήμων τινὲς δημοτῶν, ἀγανακτήσαντες πρὸς τὸ  
 κακόφημον, συλλαμβάνουσι τὸν ἄνθρωπον, καὶ πολλαῖς αἰκίζονται πλη-  
 γαῖς. ὁ δ’ ἔθ’ ὑπὲρ ἑαυτοῦ φθεγγόμενος, ἔτ’ ἰδιὰ πρὸς τὰς παύσας, αἶς  
 καὶ πρότερον φωνὰς βοῶν διετέλει νομίσαντες δ’ οἱ ἄρχοντες, ὅπερ ἦν,  
 δαιμονιώτερον εἶναι τὸ κίνημα τοῦ ἀνδρός, ἀνάγκησιν αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τὸν παρὰ  
 Ῥωμαίοις ἑπαρχον, ἔνθα μάστιξι μέχρῃς ὀσέων ξαινόμενος, ἔθ’ ἰκέτευσεν,  
 ἔτ’ ἐδάκρυσεν, ἀλλ’ ὡς ἐνῆν μάλιστα τὴν φωνὴν ὀλοφυρτικῶς παρεγκλίνων,  
 πρὸς ἐκάστην ἀπεκρίνατο πληγὴν, “ αἰ αἰ Ἱεροσολύμοις.” τῷ δὲ Ἀλβίνῳ  
 διερωτῶντος, ἔτος γὰρ ἑπαρχος ἦν, τίς εἶη καὶ πόθεν, καὶ διὰ τί ταῦτα  
 φθέγγοιτο, πρὸς ταῦτα μὲν ἔθ’ ὅτις ἀπεκρίνατο· τὸν δ’ ἐπὶ τῇ πόλει  
 θρῆνον εἰρων ἐ διέλειπε, μέχρῃ καταγνὲς μανίαν ὁ Ἀλβῖνος ἀπέλυσεν  
 αὐτόν. ὁ δὲ τὸν μέχρῃ τοῦ πολέμου χρόνον ἔτε προσήει τινὶ τῶν πολιτῶν,  
 ἔτ’ ὠφθε λαλῶν, ἀλλὰ καθ’ ἡμέραν ὥσπερ εὐχὴν μεμελετηκώς, “ αἰ αἰ  
 “ Ἱεροσολύμοις” ἐθρηνέει. ἔτε δὲ τινὶ τῶν τυπλόντων αὐτὸν ὁσημέραι  
 κατηρᾶτο, ἔτε τὰς τροφῆς μεταδιδόντας εὐλόγει. μία δὲ πρὸς πάντας  
 ἦν, ἡ σκυθρωπὴ κληδὼν ἀπόκρισις. μαλιστα δ’ ἐν ταῖς ἑορταῖς ἐκεκράγει,  
 καὶ τῷτ’ ἐφ’ ἐπὶ ἔτη, καὶ μῆνας πέντε εἰρων, ἔτ’ ἡμβλυνέθη τὴν φωνὴν,  
 ἔτε ἔκαμεν, μέχρῃς ἔ κατὰ τὴν πολιορκίαν ἔργω τὰς κληδόνας ἰδὼν,  
 ἀνεπαύσατο. περιῶν γὰρ ἐπὶ τοῦ τείχους, “ αἰ αἰ πάλιν τῇ πόλει καὶ  
 “ τῷ λαῷ καὶ τῷ ναῷ” διαπρύσιον ἐβόα. ὡς δὲ τελευτᾶιον προσέειπεν  
 “ αἰ αἰ δὲ κάρμοι,” λιθὸς ἐκ τοῦ πετροβόλου σχασθεὶς, καὶ πλήξας  
 αὐτόν, παραχρῆμα κλείνει· φθεγγόμενος δ’ ἔτι τὰς κληδόνας ἐκείνας, τὴν  
 ψυχὴν ἀφῆκεν.

*Jos. de bello Jud. Lib. vi. Cap. v. § 3. pag. 1282, 1283. Tom. ii.*

*Hud. edit.*

These extracts have been already drawn out to great length, otherwise I felt much disposed to transcribe the animated and minute description which Josephus gives of the Temple, in confirmation of that which has been advanced in the preceding Lecture, both respecting it's beauty and the circumstances of it's destruction. The first is to be found in *Josephus de bello Judeorum, Tom. ii. Lib. v. Cap. v. pag. 1225—1230. Huds. edit.* The second, in all it's horrible fea-



tures, is pourtrayed in *Jos. de bello Jud. Tom. ii. Lib. vi. Cap. 4, pag 1276—1279. Huds. Edit.* Indeed the whole of the history of Josephus respecting the Wars of the Jews, of which also he was an eyewitness, should be diligently read, as a complete and irresistible evidence of the perfect accomplishment of our Lord's prediction relative to the destruction of Jerusalem, and the terrible circumstances of that disastrous event.



## LECTURE XIV.

## ON PROPHECIES UNFULFILLED.

## ACTS i. 7.

*And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.*

## REV. xxii. 18—20.

*For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. He which testifieth these things, saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!*



EVERY thing connected with this world is local and temporary. The empires which human co-operation has raised, are continually changing: the sceptre is passing from hand to hand; and the balance of power among the nations is perpetually shifting. The busy, ardent countenance of every man whom we meet, discovers that he is, or thinks that he is, of some importance. But so his fathers thought before him; and they are forgotten; so his children shall think after him, when he sleeps in the dust, and all his talents, his activity, and his services, are buried with him. "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh." We trample the dust of our ancestors under our feet, without reflecting that it once lived, and without recollecting that we also shall be mingled with the clods of the valley.

Religious dispensations are changing also. We see Aaron, God's high priest, going up to the top of Mount Hor, and laying down his robes and his life together. The Son descends, arrayed in his Father's vestments, to fill his place for a season; and then to bequeath the priestly raiment, and the priestly office, to his succes-



sor. The apostle looks back upon the long train, who presided first in the tabernacle, and then in the temple, and says—"these were not suffered to continue by reason of death." When this order of things was set aside, and the simplicity of the gospel supplanted the pomp of Judaism, the same vicissitudes marked the new dispensation; and upon Christian temples we see inscribed the same characters of mutability. The apostles followed the prophets to the land of silence. Their testimony was taken up by pastors and teachers; and God has maintained, without interruption, a standing ministry. These have been called away, every man in his order, to resign their employment, and to give an account of their stewardship. The distribution of ordinances now rests with us, upon whom the care of the churches devolves in the present day, and who wait the signal to depart, and to resign our office to others. We see your countenances change from sabbath to sabbath, as we address you in our respective congregations. We remember that other feet have stood in our pulpits, and that other voices have sounded within the walls which encircle our worshipping assemblies. Every year some of our people drop around us; we perceive the grave opening at our own feet, and death ready to seal our lips, when we shall have pronounced the mes-



sages which God commands us to deliver. And not only do *we* change, but the whole Creation fades around us. The heavens are waxing old. The foundations of the earth are decaying. The pillars which prop universal nature bend with age, tremble under the pressure of years, and appear ready to sink beneath the additional weight which time imposes. He alone remains unchanged who created them; and he is saying, "Behold, I make all things new!" These reflections naturally suggest themselves under the circumstances in which I feel myself standing this night—at the close of my present engagement, and for the last time addressing the congregation which the exercises of the past winter had collected, and which the present Lecture is to separate.

When we speak of events which either have transpired, or which we anticipate as about to happen, we find no difficulty in fixing dates, which convey our conceptions of the periods, either past or expected, to our brethren of mankind. The last year, or the next month, are terms familiar to us; and they form so considerable a portion of our transitory lives, that men have been at the pains to subdivide them into much smaller parts, so that even a moment bears its proportion, in the calculation of the



whole. Time is to us an immense object; an object too large to apprehend, without the aid of those subordinate calculations, which, like so many progressive steps, lead us to it's summit, and enable us to ascertain it's altitude. But it is far otherwise with the Deity. To him—time itself is but a point. It is easy, therefore, to conceive, that his calculations will frequently exceed the narrow limits of our comprehension. Accordingly, we often think that he delays a promise, from our misconception of the period when it is to be fulfilled. We accuse his chariot-wheels of lingering, when the hour of his appointment has not yet actually arrived. We judge of him by ourselves—a most erroneous standard! We measure his periods by the scale of our own calculations. We forget, that as with him nothing is premature, so nothing can be retarded: that it is not for us “to know the times, or the seasons, which he has reserved in his own hands;” and we are therefore disappointed, through our presumption, or our impatience, or our ignorance.

When God speaks of time, he usually speaks of it as a whole, without regarding it's little divisions: for it is less in the scale of his eternity, than a moment is to all it's accumulated ages, from it's commencement to it's consummation. There are four or five epochs in time which he



sometimes condescends to fix as the measurement of his providence and purposes. The day, when he set the stream of existence flowing; when "the morning stars sang together, and "the sons of God shouted for joy;" when a beautiful and harmonious creation emerged from the darkness and discord of chaos. The day, when willing to shew his "wrath, and "to make his power known," he broke up "the fountains of the deep," and opened "the "windows of heaven," and destroyed the earth which he had made, and with it the rebels who had grieved his Spirit; and all flesh died—a remnant excepted, amounting only to "eight "souls," whom he preserved unhurt amidst this universal overthrow. The day, when his only-begotten Son veiled his uncreated glory in human flesh, and tabernacled with men, and died, "the just for the unjust," that he might bring us to God. The day, when "the mountain "of the Lord's House shall be exalted above "every high hill, and the nations shall flow "unto it;" when the Jew shall stretch forth his hand to Messiah the Prince, and say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of "the Lord;" when Jehovah will "set his King "upon his holy hill of Zion," and give him "the heathen for his inheritance, and the utter- "most parts of the earth for his possession."



The day, when the angel shall “stand upon the  
 “sea, and upon the earth, and lift up his hand  
 “to heaven, and swear by him that liveth for  
 “ever and ever—that there shall be time no  
 “longer.” These are the epochs which God  
 fixes, as the measurement of his time; and not  
 the reigns of Ahasuerus, and Alexander, and  
 Cæsar, and the long succession of monarchs,  
 from Nimrod to the last who shall sit upon a  
 throne. These are all inferior events, swallowed  
 up and unnoticed in divine calculation. In the  
 prosecution of the subject of this evening, these  
 preliminary remarks may not be altogether use-  
 less; and it will be necessary that you should  
 bear in mind the sublime and important fact,  
 that “one day is with the Lord as a thousand  
 “years, and a thousand years as one day.”—

The subject of this concluding Lecture is—  
 PROPHECIES UNFULFILLED. It will not be un-  
 derstood from this expression that any have  
 failed, but that some, and those of the most in-  
 teresting nature, remain to be accomplished.  
 The following remarks will comprise all that I  
 have to advance upon so difficult a subject:

First, That our inquiries after prophecies un-  
 fulfilled ought to be modest and cautious;

Secondly, That the Scriptures furnish distinct



general outlines of the events predicted, and yet to come, leaving them to be filled up by time.

Thirdly, That it is a duty to keep our eye fixed upon prophecy in tracing the dispensations of providence, and to compare from time to time the one with the other; yet rather to apprehend that which is gradually unfolded, than to pre-judge that which still is concealed.

First, Our inquiries after prophecies unfulfilled ought to be modest and cautious.

It is the fashion of the present day to confine the line of prophecy almost entirely to this single branch of the subject; and innumerable efforts have lately been made to establish a system of calculation upon the mysterious language of predictions little understood, because at present undetermined by time, as a standard by which the most interesting events may be predetermined with accuracy. It is impossible not to admire the ingenuity, the learning, and the industry, which writers upon this subject have displayed; we cannot be sufficiently thankful to those who lay out so much strength at this eventful period to vindicate eternal providence, and to justify the ways of God to man. Yet it may, perhaps, be doubted whether they have not stepped over the line prescrib-



ed by him to whom alone the volume of futurity lies open; and who has written, "things that are revealed belong to us and to our children; but secret things belong to the Lord our God." The design of prophecy appears to be not to give man prescience, but to prove that God possesses it. Time has ever been the great interpreter of prophecy; and the wisdom of God has appeared in this: predictions have been couched in terms sufficiently obscure effectually to check the presumption of curiosity; yet sufficiently luminous to afford the most satisfactory evidence, when once the transactions to which they referred have taken place, that every circumstance was foreordained, foreseen, and foretold. He that will be the precursor of time in the regions of prophecy must travel surrounded by a perpetual mist, through which indeed a variety of objects are visible, but none of them distinctly seen; but he who is satisfied to follow closely the footsteps of this infallible guide, will have the pleasure of seeing the cloud gradually rolling away as he advances, and a world of order and harmony emerging from confusion and obscurity. There is a striking correspondence in point of imagery, general composition, spirit, and energy, between prophecies of events long since decided, and predictions which relate to future and unseen trans-



actions. There does not appear to be any reason why the last should not be as intelligible as the first—except that it wants the illumination of time afforded to the former, by which we are able to compare the prophecy with the object to which it was directed. Till this could be done, ancient predictions were as obscure as those of the latter dispensation remain still to us; and in every instance in which the remembrance of the event to which any prediction related has perished from the records of history, that prediction, so separated from it's corresponding object, is to us as obscure and as unintelligible, as any prophecy relating to futurity. This remark has been abundantly established in the difficulty sometimes occurring in the preceding Lectures, to determine with any sort of satisfaction the meaning of predictions, the corresponding history of which has not reached the present times. Perhaps it does not require any other evidence, that we run too fast when we endeavour to anticipate the discoveries of time, than the distraction and variety of human hypotheses: the wide disagreement of men of equal talents and industry upon the same point of prophecy; and the total and repeated failure of some of those calculations upon which the greatest stress has been laid, and respecting which they have expressed the most decided conviction, amounting to every thing except absolute certainty. If



this reasoning be just the conclusion is irresistible, that our inquiries after prophecies unfulfilled should be modest and cautious: that we should beware of leaning too much to our own understandings—of pressing too far our private opinions—of attempting to give them the stamp and currency of inspired truth; of slackening the reins over imagination, naturally impetuous, and in so elevated and trackless a region almost entirely ungovernable: finding “no end, in “wandering mazes lost.”—The question recurs—for what were these predictions then given? Doubtless to be received with thankfulness, to be examined with diligence and caution, and to afford us some measure of consolation amidst the ills of the present, in prospect of the more glorious and animating future. For this reason we remarked,

Secondly, That the Scriptures furnish distinct *general* outlines of the events predicted, and yet to come, leaving them to be filled up by time. There are three or four most distinct and impressive predictions, which are as capable of evidence, so far as they have been already accomplished, as any prophecy relating to events which are past.

1. THE POWER AND DOMINION OF ANTI-CHRIST. A better definition of this term I cannot



give than that which the apostle John has furnished. Who is a liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is anti-christ that denieth the Father and the Son. And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God. And this is that spirit of anti-christ, whereof ye have heard that it should come, and even now already is it in the world." This general yet forcible description applying to every thing that opposes itself to the gospel of Christ, has met with some most extraordinary accomplishments in all its leading features, and will equally apply to PAPAL, MAHOMETAN, and INFIDEL Anti-christ: for, said the same apostle, "there are *many* Anti-christs."

The nature of that domination over conscience which the Roman PAPAL power should assume; the high pretensions of the head of her corrupt church; the lying wonders, the feigned miracles of her priesthood; and the utter destruction of so dreadful a system, were among the things distinctly foretold. "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped: so that he as God, sitteth in the



“ temple of God, shewing himself that he is  
 “ God”—“ then shall that wicked be revealed,  
 “ whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit  
 “ of his mouth, and shall destroy with the  
 “ brightness of his coming: even him, whose  
 “ coming is after the working of Satan, with  
 “ all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and  
 “ with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in  
 “ them that perish, because they received not  
 “ the love of the truth, that they might be  
 “ saved.”

Respecting MAHOMETAN Anti-christ I enter not into the discussion, which would lead me too far from my purpose: it is included in St. John's general description; and it must perish with every thing that exalts itself against our God and his Christ.

Respecting INFIDEL Anti-christ, it is sufficiently delineated in that “ philosophy and vain  
 “ deceit,” against which we are explicitly cautioned; and the times of which are marked by the prediction of a general apostasy, but too applicable to some of the features of this eventful period. Satisfied with merely sketching this general outline, I hasten to turn your eyes upon another most luminous point in prophecies yet unfulfilled, as to their whole extent,

2. THE UNIVERSAL DOMINION OF JESUS CHRIST. This undoubtedly constitutes the most



brilliant and impressive portion of the prophetic writings, for the complete elucidation of which we are looking, with anxiety and with indescribable interest, to the present extraordinary and awful dispensations of providence. This point has already been slightly touched in the effects of the Redeemer's exaltation. It will be now necessary to enter a little more at large upon a subject so interesting. We turn with disgust from those scenes, which man in obedience to his passions, and in the pride of his power, has displayed, to those which the divine providence shall unfold, when the dominion of Jesus Christ shall be set up in the world; and when human nature shall obey other principles than those which we have seen called into action, while we have had reason to blush at the exhibition. We have indeed in this case also to contemplate a conqueror; but it is a hero of another order than him whom one half of the world worships, and the other execrates. This conqueror subdues the hearts, while others enslave the bodies of men. This hero is to vanquish by the word of his mouth, while they lay waste with fire and with the sword. The effects of their victories are weeping and lamentation, poverty and famine; death rides on his pale horse by their side: but the consequence of *his* rising to claim



the empire, whose right it is, will be the destruction of sin and the annihilation of misery.

It would be endless to place before you the vast variety of passages which relate to the growing empire of the Redeemer, and which predict it's universal extent, it's miraculous effects, it's eternal duration. It is equally difficult, from so splendid and harmonious a list, to make a selection. There remains but one method, to confine the Lecture within due limits; and that is, to consider one passage as the representative of the whole. Isaiah describes the nature and the influence of the dominion of Christ. "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." There cannot be any doubt to whom the connection of this passage should be applied, when the subject of it is called, "A rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch from his roots." The description of his qualifications will not suit any character less dignified than the Son of God; and that which was gross flattery when applied by the Roman Bard, in the most beautiful poem of all antiquity, to Marcellus, became accomplished in all the spirit of it's sublime imagery in Jesus of Nazareth. The effects of his kingdom will be as gracious in the moral world, as is implied in the figures



which prophecy borrows from the natural world. Already we receive a pledge of the influence of Christianity in it's universal diffusion, in the effects produced by it daily, on a smaller scale, in it's transformation of the character of individuals. As yet we see the operation of this glorious principle very confined: but it is animating to anticipate that which shall assuredly be, although our eyes shall not behold it; and it is consoling to think, that those very calamities, which we must be utterly insensible indeed not to deplore in their present influence, are among the events, which, under the regulation of the divine wisdom, shall produce that incalculable good, which we are taught, on the testimony of prophecy, to expect. The extension of the kingdom of Jesus Christ is called the diffusion of *knowledge*. Every man knows something of the Great Spirit who made and regulates the world; and with whom he is so intimately connected. There is a testimony to his being and perfections, both within, in the voice of conscience; and without, in the operations of nature. But knowledge may be more or less accurate, and more or less efficient. This is to be a knowledge at once accurate and experimental, a revelation shall be made universally of the nature, the laws and the government of God; the wan-



derings of the human mind are to be counteracted; and it is a knowledge not confined to the understanding, but which is also supposed to influence the heart.

We have been accustomed to consider this intelligence as an inestimable good, but as a good *confined*. Natural light is universal; moral light is at present partial and circumscribed. But the promises of this prediction represent the river of God, which now waters this country, and washes a few other spots of the habitable globe, breaking from it's confinement, and overflowing it's channel. It shall be no longer a stream visiting in it's windings a few favoured fields; but it shall become a mighty ocean, spreading with resistless force over the face of all nations, and sweeping away in it's progress all opposition. It must be allowed that this suggestion is benevolent. It is honourable to the enlarged principles of Christianity. It is also peculiar to them. When man framed to himself a conception of God, he considered him a partial Being, confining his regards to one spot of the earth, to one city, or at most to one empire. So under the former dispensation, privileges of a religious nature were confined to one peculiar race of people: and it remained for Christianity to break down the wall of partition; to abolish these distinctions, and to command, "Go ye into all



“ the world, and preach the gospel to every  
“ creature.”

The *certainty* of this event is founded upon the clearness of the prediction, and the absolute-ness of the promise. Without recurring to the divine fidelity and ability, it may be perhaps a more satisfactory argument here, to consider what he has already done, as a pledge for the future. Whatever of difficulty may be supposed to lie, and actually does lie, in the way of the diffusion of religious knowledge among barbarous and idolatrous nations, it must be admitted that the same difficulties presented themselves to the first missionaries in this great cause, respecting all those nations which are now partakers of this knowledge, and Great Britain among their number. The fact is simply this—human nature is the same in all ages, in all countries, under all circumstances. “ The carnal mind” was always “ enmity against God;” and men always “ loved darkness more than light, because their  
“ deeds were evil.” Now the same power which subdued these oppositions, in respect of some, can do it in respect of all; and as the gospel has triumphed already in part, we receive in this very circumstance, a most satisfactory pledge that the whole shall be accomplished. Neither is there any power that can lift itself against the will and the purpose of God; but those very



agents, who act merely upon the impulse of their own depraved passions, or even designedly against the avowed plans of Deity, shall become under his constraining, over-ruling hand, the instruments of promoting the work, of which they are altogether ignorant, or which they labour to destroy.

The *effects* which this kingdom shall produce are most beneficial. Men shall be *kindly affectioned* one towards another. In vain you make peace, and enter into treaties and alliances; while the root of bitterness, the spirit of strife, is within, tranquillity cannot be lasting. Religion will, as at present, promote the peace of society, by controuling and subduing the passions of individuals. It obtains possession of the heart; and it's effects on the life inevitably and invariably follow. Society arises out of the combined forces, habits, customs, operations, and influence of individuals. So far as the individual is affected, to a certain extent society is affected; and thus religion will extend it's influence over individuals, till whole nations shall fall under it's righteous dominion. The flames which devour the earth are kindled and nourished by a fire within the human bosom; extinguish the one, and the other will of necessity go out. Kindness without, will be the consequence of *peace* within. The principles of religion in their



universal prevalence, cannot be less efficient than they are at present in a more confined sphere in the individual. What do they make a man when they take possession of his heart? That will they make an empire, a continent, a world. Do they subdue his vile tempers; mortify his corrupt affections? restrain his brutal passions? Do they make the ferocious, gentle? the morose, kind? the hardened, tender? Do they change the lion into the lamb? and convert the venom of the serpent into the harmlessness of the dove? Is this their present influence? Be assured they will be no less effective and no less gracious on the grand and general scale marked out by Scripture prophecy. The same principles must always produce the same influence; and the same causes, the same effects, whether on a wider or more contracted range; the one will be proportionate to the other, and each uniformly true to each. Such then shall the world become. Its passions shall be subdued. Its instruments of cruelty shall be exchanged for the implements of husbandry; and contending nations learn war no more. “The wolf also shall dwell with the  
 “lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the  
 “kid: and the calf, and the young lion, and  
 “the fatling together, and a little child shall  
 “lead them. And the cow and the bear shall  
 “feed, their young ones shall lie down together;



“and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And  
 “the sucking child shall play on the hole of the  
 “asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand  
 “on the cockatrice den.” Beautiful imagery!  
 to express the renovation of the passions, and  
 moral transformation.

*Universal holiness* is an effect of the diffusion  
 of Christian knowledge as well as universal  
 peace. The whole earth becomes consecrated—  
 God’s habitation—his temple—his rest—his  
 “holy mountain.” We suffer from example.  
 Example excites and stimulates those depraved  
 propensities which are within us. Example  
 hardens men in sin. Example deeply influences  
 the individual; and soon gives a character to  
 associated multitudes. *Now* evil examples  
 abound to strengthen our depravity: but *then*,  
 one individual will operate upon another; and  
 one body of men upon another; and one nation  
 upon another; to stimulate to works of faith  
 and of love; and to an exhibition of holy prac-  
 tices, as the results of holy principles. Evil  
 shall be thus destroyed; and the Prince of Peace  
 give at length to this distracted world, rent  
 with human contentions, in the tranquillity  
 and in the purity of his empire, a foretaste of  
 heaven, before he consumes it to destroy the  
 curse, and makes all things new. “The king-  
 “doms of this world shall become the king-



“doms of our God and of his Christ; and he  
 “shall reign for ever and ever.” Such are the  
*general* outlines of some most important prophecies, partly accomplished, partly fulfilling, but which remain to be completed; and this sublime outline, the hand of time is filling up.

Thirdly: It is our duty to keep our eye fixed upon prophecy, in tracing the dispensations of Providence, and to compare from time to time the one with the other; yet rather to apprehend that which is gradually unfolding, than to prejudge that which still lies concealed. The statement of this sentiment in itself almost intirely conveys what I design to propose as our most suitable line of conduct in the present singular period. The events which have long occupied the attention, and excited the apprehensions of mankind, have been, upon all human estimates, as melancholy in their effects as extraordinary in their causes. The wide and universal distractions which have rent kingdoms, and overturned thrones, have been painful to witness, and would be endless to detail. There are two points of view in which they are interesting. They effectually develope human principles; they clearly discover (in contradiction to all modern theories which deny the doctrine of human depravity) what is in man; and they demonstrate that our



Lord was not deceived when he described all the calamities without, as proceeding from a fountain of iniquity within. We have seen these principles called into action upon a most extended scale; and they reflect no sort of honour upon human nature. These affecting transactions are also interesting, as they are most manifestly accomplishing what yet remains of prophecies unfulfilled. Papal Anti-christ has not only been paralysed by the shocks of these fearful convulsions, but is gradually expiring under their influence. "The whole head is sick, the whole heart is faint," and the disease is mortal. Eastern Anti-christ shall assuredly follow. The seat of Mahomet must be shaken; and Turkey, the bosom that has cherished this enemy of the Lord Christ ought to tremble. Her present system must eventually be overthrown; we presume not to say when, or by whom: the event only is certain. The only reason that can be assigned for the success of France is, that hitherto her arms have passed along the line of providence; whenever she has departed from this line, and turned them against Britain, she has been defeated; and when the great design shall eventually be accomplished, the instrument shall be laid aside. Infidel Anti-christ shall then expire too—destroyed "by the Spirit of the Lord's mouth, and consumed with the brightness of



“his coming.” “And then cometh the end. But  
“as yet we see not all things put under him;”  
and our posture should be that of patient, re-  
signed, teachable, expectation. I will not occu-  
py your time by noticing the scandalous abuses  
and impositions of modern prophecy so called;  
when wretched, illiterate, designing persons, pro-  
fess to be inspired; and casting off all shame,  
wax worse and worse, deceiving and being de-  
ceived. We may well spare our censure, when  
so dreadful a sentence is passed upon them in  
the passage read at the commencement of this  
Lecture: “If any man shall add unto these  
“things, God shall add unto him the plagues  
“that are written in this book.” Nor is the  
sentence against infidelity less dreadful. If  
“any man shall take away from the words of  
“the book of this prophecy, God shall take  
“away his part out of the book of life, and out  
“of the holy city, and out of the things which  
“are written in this book.”

This then is the whole. And I now feel  
the moment of separation a very awful and im-  
pressive one. “Our fathers where are they?  
“and the prophets, do they live for ever?”  
Time has done for them what it is doing for us  
—they are removed from our sphere, and we are  
rising to that which they are promoted to oc-  
cupy. Moses and Samuel, Noah, and Daniel,



and Job, are recorded in the prophecies as having distinguished power to prevail with God. What is left them but a name! A name indeed that shall live till they re-appear with their Master—a memory that is blessed—an example that can never cease to operate—an eulogy more honourable than the proudest monuments of human greatness—pronounced by the mouth of God himself—recorded on the imperishable page of inspiration—and sanctioned by the voice of all succeeding ages. But they have gone to rest: they sleep in the dust: they no longer live, and walk, and converse, among men; they cease to be seen of us; and the earth has received them into her bosom; has covered them among the multitudes whom time has slain; and hides them from our eyes. “When a few years are come, then shall we also go the way, whence we shall not return.” It *may* be but a few days: it *can* be but a few years. This night another religious arrangement closes; and its seasons of worship are numbered and finished. This night the estimates of your privileges and of your improvements are made and compared. This night the balance is struck; the final audit of this account granted; and the issue will be disclosed when time strikes *his* balance, and renders up *his* account. “Boast not thyself,” O man, “of to-morrow.” No new ac-



count may be opened with thee! The page which is full, and to which the signature of heaven is even now, while I speak, affixed—may be the last page of thy life! Hast thou seen the date written over the day of thy death? or hast thou entered into a league with the insatiate destroyer to spare thee, while he devours the world? Or hast thou received a covenant from him, with whom are the issues of life, for the full date of man's threescore and ten years? If thou knowest not what shall be on the morrow; if thy times are in his hand; if futurity is concealed from thee; then, listen to his admonition at whose disposal thy life, and all future events are—wait—occupy—consider—prepare—“Go thou thy way till the end be: for thou”  
 “also shalt rest, and stand in thy lot, at the  
 “end of the days!”

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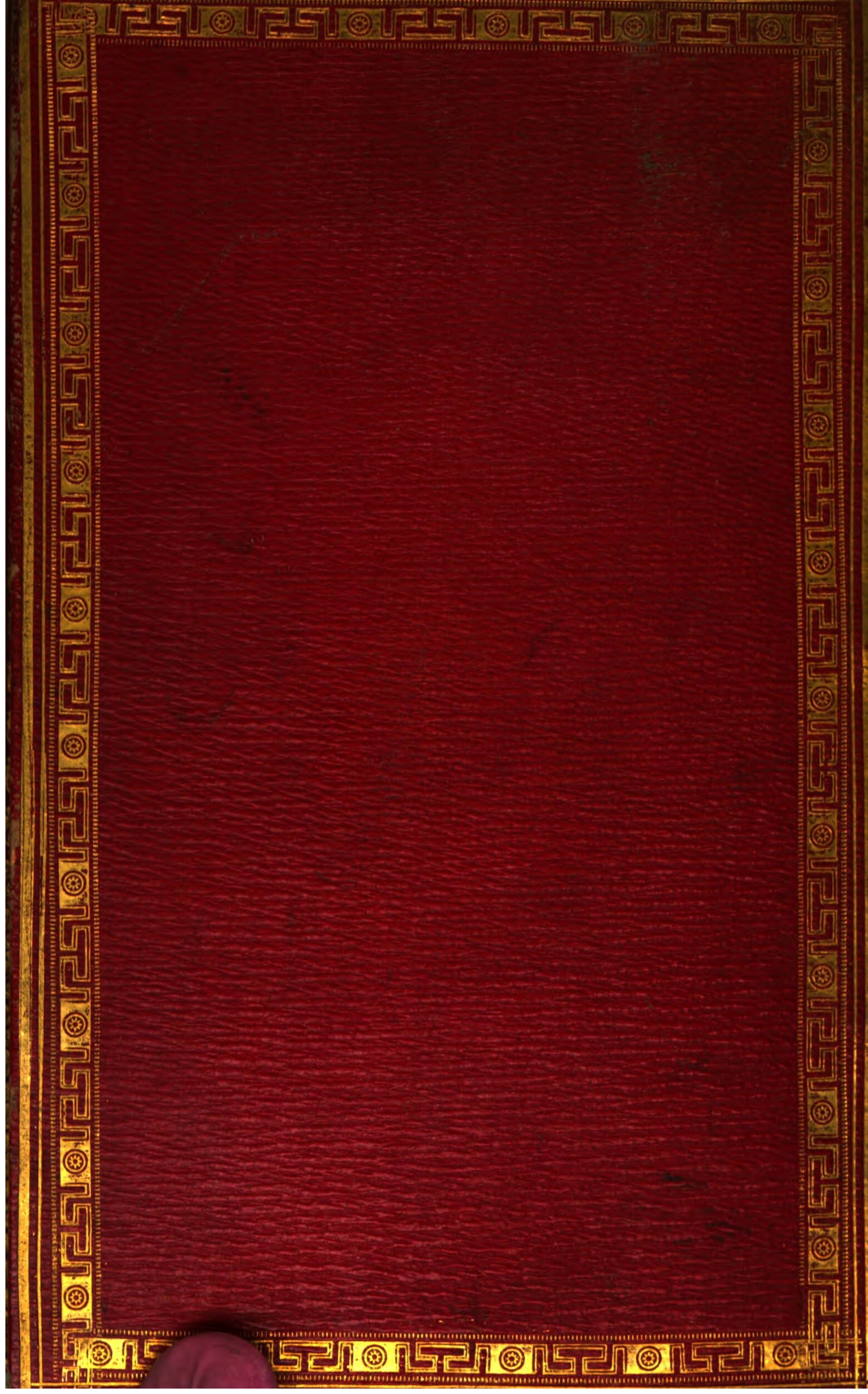














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